

# **QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCESSES**

**The Nature, Outcomes and Effectiveness of Quality  
Assurance Processes of the Catholic Education Office, Sydney**

Submitted by

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## STATEMENT OF SOURCES

*This thesis contains no material published elsewhere or extracted in whole or in part from a thesis by which I have qualified for or been awarded another degree or diploma.*

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Signed.....

Date.....20 - 8 - 99

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **AIMS**

The project examines the perceptions of significant stakeholders in the Catholic Education system concerning the nature, outcomes and effectiveness of the implementation of the Quality Assurance Processes developed by the Catholic Education Office (CEO), in the Archdiocese of Sydney. The study identifies factors that were assisting or hindering the effective implementation of these processes as they existed in 1996. It offers suggestions and recommendations for a future and more effective implementation of these processes.

### **SCOPE**

This research is qualitative in nature, and uses interview as the main source of data collection. The Catholic schools selected for this study are those that have been involved in the implementation of the first Cycle of the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney. Care was taken to select two schools from each of the three Regions under which the Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Sydney are presently organised.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

The achievement and maintenance of quality outcomes has always been an integral part of Catholic Education. Through the brief historical background, this study has revealed that leaders in Catholic Education in Sydney have always sought to achieve and maintain quality outcomes since the establishment of the first schools, up until the implementation of the current quality assurance processes.

This study found that the current form of Quality Assurance Processes is a most effective means of achieving and maintaining quality outcomes in the present-day

Catholic education system. The Processes are professionally articulated in context with current practices, and have the potential to enhance accountability, credibility and development of both the personnel and the schools system. The implementation of the Quality Assurance Processes, to a great degree, has been effective and successful, the present study has shown that, stakeholders are becoming more and more aware of the actual nature and outcomes of these processes. The study also found great optimism among in the key player about the future of the Processes and has concluded that they well received and appreciated across the system.

There were a few concerns about the clarity of aims and objectivity, the link between the different processes, and the apparently high and technical terms involved in naming/describing these Processes. The study has, therefore, concluded further that the Processes need streamlining, regular reviews and training programs to strengthen the practice and consolidate the gains and achievement. The implementation of Cycle 2 with appropriate modification is desirable.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### **SETTING THE SCENE: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE CURRENT QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCESSES OF THE CEO, SYDNEY.**

#### **1.1 Introduction**

Education forms an integral part of the evangelising mission of the Catholic Church (ACBC, 1998; Code of Canon Law, 793-821; Congregation for Catholic Education, 1998; Vatican II Declaration on Christian Education, n. 8). The commitment to achievement and maintenance of quality outcomes in education has always been a priority issue for Catholic Education institutions and schools. A reflection on the past events, as will be shown in this study, confirms that the goals to achieve and maintain quality outcomes (quality assurance) have always been the aims and aspirations of the leaders and directors of Catholic Education in Australia (Canavan, 1990a; Hart, 1980; The Education of Catholic Australians, 1972).

Today, 'Quality Assurance' has emerged as a management philosophy and practice not only in the business sector, but also in the education sector (Abbott, 1994; Bezzina, Coleman, De Courcy & Whitby, 1996; Cuttance, 1994b, 1995a, 1998; McKay & Kember, 1999). This present project is focused on this management philosophy with particular reference to how it is practised in the Archdiocese of Sydney under the auspices of the Catholic Education Office (CEO), Sydney.

The purpose of this first Chapter is to set the scene for the study, and by that, offer an insight to the background and rationale for the topic of the present study. It is also to state the problem and establish the scope of the study. Accordingly, this Chapter traces a brief history of the practice and development of 'Quality Assurance' from the early stages of Catholic education in Sydney up until what is being implemented at present

as Quality Assurance Processes of the Catholic Education Office (CEO), Sydney.

A complete and exhaustive history of Catholic Education in Sydney would be long and too detailed for the present purpose. Attention is therefore, focused on issues, actions, events or specific circumstances that have occurred or are occurring in the Catholic schools, and are regarded as efforts by the Catholic education leadership in the direction of achieving and maintaining quality outcomes in teaching and learning. Such a brief historical background is aimed at providing a logical introduction to the development, and implementation of the current Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney. In this way, the reader is led to appreciate more, the philosophy underpinning the implementation of these Processes; how and why they are so designed and implemented by the CEO, and why it is important to carry out a research in this area.

## **1.2 The Presence of Religious Teaching Orders in Catholic Schools**

History has it, that while there may have been an earlier attempt to establish Catholic schools during the early days of white settlement in the colonial Australia, the first Catholic school was opened in about late 1820 or early 1821 (Austin, 1961; Barcan, 1988; Brick, 1998; Fogarty, 1957; Luttrell, 1992, 1996; Tannock, 1975). For a good number of years, Catholic school(s) received Government funding for both buildings and staff salaries.

However, when a Government decree of 1880 made education in Australia 'mandatory', 'free' and 'secular' (Luttrell, 1996, p. 23), and subsequently withdrew government funding for non-government schools, there were reasons for the Bishops to fear that the quality of Catholic education was going to be adversely affected. Firstly, there was concern that the secularisation of education was going to jeopardise the quality and teaching of religious education in the schools. Secondly, there was fear that the government withdrawal of funding would undermine the employment of sufficient and qualified staff in the Catholic schools (Hogan, 1978).

To ensure that Catholic schools continued to achieve and maintain quality outcomes and remain committed to the mission for which they were established, the Bishops took steps to invite the Religious Teaching Orders from Ireland and Europe to come to staff and lead the schools. These Religious Orders of European and Irish origins, together with those that sprang up in Australia itself, provided the needed staff and personnel for the Catholic schools between the 1880s and the 1970s (Canavan, 1986, 1990; Luttrell, 1996; Fogarty, 1957).

The advantages of having the Religious Orders to open and manage the Catholic schools ranged from spiritual to material. Being Religious, these teachers and school leaders were not only skilled in pedagogy, but also knowledgeable in Catholic Doctrine. They were also very disciplined, trusted and reliable (Steele, 1998). In terms of material and financial advantages for the schools, these Religious received no salaries except a stipend; yet they were trained and recruited by their own Orders on behalf of the Archbishop. In the language of quality assurance practices of today, the presence and services of these Religious in schools would fit the definition and description as 'hassle-free' and 'cost free' (Crosby, 1984; Kruithof, 1993).

### **1.3 Appointment of School Inspectors**

Inspectors and Directors of education in the Catholic system were always appointed by the Bishop or Archbishop to ensure that the education offered to the Catholic children was of the required standard and quality, and to see to it that the schools were really Catholic (Flynn, 1993; Luttrell, 1996; McLaughlin, O'Keefe & O'Keefe, 1996). The first Diocesan Inspector of schools was Fr. John McEncroe from 1848–66 who had four lay men as assistants. Since then, there followed a line of Inspectors, (mostly priests) between 1848 and 1965 (Luttrell, 1992, 1996). The Diocesan Inspector's position was not only a traditional office but also an important authority in the functioning of the Catholic schools in Sydney. Their day-to-day activities and individual roles would be too detailed for the present purpose. A record showing the names, period of appointment (1848-1965) and possible historical factors or influences that dominated that period, can be seen in Appendix A.

Suffice it to point out that the appointment of these inspectors, more than anything else, reflected the concern the diocese and the Bishops had for the achievement and maintenance of quality in the Catholic schools. These Diocesan Inspectors were those who carried out the earliest known form of what could be described in modern terms as ‘quality checks’ or ‘*quality assurance processes*’, while they inspected the schools to ensure their Catholic status and identity. While the attention of these inspectors was, understandably focused on maintaining the authentic Catholic dimension of the schools at that stage, it is clear that the overall aim was to ensure quality. That was “quality assurance” being practised in the form it was known at that time (CEO, 1996, p. 9).

The appointment of Fr. Thomas Pierse in 1939, however, deserves special mention. Fr. Pierse was authorised to establish the first Catholic Education Office (CEO) in the Archbishop’s headquarters. This significant step reflected the concern of the diocesan authority for a more effective co-ordination and control over the activities of the Catholic schools in order to ensure ‘quality outcomes’.

Luttrell, (1992) describes Pierse’s roles in the following quote:

Pierse began his work in 1939 with the aim of improving standards. He advocated the development of good habits of speaking, reading, and writing and the compilation of a library for each class. Discipline, order and respect were demanded, especially in the presence of the Inspector. His monthly Catholic Education Gazette contained instructions and advice on school organisation and the improvement of discipline (p. 53).

From the new Office, the team of Catholic Inspectors went out to examine, supervise and report to the Archbishop on the strength and weaknesses of the schools. Such reports would generally raise issues such as the condition (quality) of staff and facilities in the schools as well as the general conditions prevalent there. While the terminology would not have been in common use then, it is clear that the aims and goals of the inspection exercises included the achievement of ‘quality’ or ‘quality assurance’.

The then CEO also maintained a link and regular communication with the hierarchy and all other stakeholder groups in the Catholic education system through circulars letters. These circular letters were also a forum for being accountable and maintaining quality standards. As Luttrell (1992) maintains, the circulars carried

. . . information on events of the school year, reminders of diocesan regulations and policies, comments of inspectors, exhortations on areas to be improved (p. 40).

Another appointment that requires special mention was that of Fr. John Slowey in 1949. In 1954 his title was changed from Inspector to 'Diocesan Director of Schools', and during his time Fr. John Slowey had up to eleven Inspectors to assist him, mainly priests and members of Religious Orders. By 1965 the inspectors appointed were to act as 'supervisors' and not just inspectors. This change in title meant that they were to effect a change in approach, concentrating more on supervising the quality and standard of the schools rather than merely inspecting as though they were policing the teachers. This again was a major indication that quality or quality assurance has always been the concern of the Catholic education leadership and management.

#### **1.4 Using the Diocesan Examinations**

The Diocesan examination and supervision of the teaching of religion were among the activities aimed at checking on, ensuring and maintaining the quality of the schools. High standards were always demanded, and where the results were poor or below standard, as it is believed to have happened in 1942 in two of the congregational schools (Luttrell, 1992, p. 46), corrective steps had to be taken by those responsible for the improvement of the system. For instance, a syllabus for the courses in religion published in 1940 was to be revised in 1942 to provide improved guidance in catechetical approaches and improve the quality outcomes.

### 1.5 Adapting to Increase in Population

After World War II, the 'baby boom' of the 1950s and changes in the immigration program significantly increased the population of Australia, and this naturally swelled up the numbers in the schools. More teachers were required to cope with that increase and to make sure that quality was achieved and maintained. The kind of '*quality assurance*' measure required and taken was to train lay teachers to supplement the shortfall. Accordingly, a Teachers Training College, which started in Mount Street, North Sydney in 1958, offered a welcome opportunity to train female lay teachers. Similarly, from 1969 lay male students were being admitted into the De La Salle College at Castle Hill, the Marist Brothers College at Dundas and the Christian Brothers College at Strathfield, to train as Catholic teachers.

Other events or circumstances that are indicative of quality measures include: the move to centralise the school finances (Canavan, 1988; D'Orsa, 1994); the appointment of a Director of Schools (Luttrell, 1996); the regionalisation of schools in the Archdiocese and the establishment of the Catholic Education Offices in the Regions (Hart, 1980). It is not possible that all these could have been implemented without the intention or aim of achieving and maintaining quality standards and control, which in modern terminology, are referred to as 'quality assurance practices'.

### 1.6 Adapting to Changes in Leadership

When the leadership of Catholic Education in Sydney was under the clergy and religious congregations (about 1880-1970) they had their particular appraisal procedures or means of validating the staff and their performance to ensure the achievement and maintenance of quality and standards in the schools. In particular, the Religious practised what they called 'the Review Consultation (RC)' in which the Religious and their superiors reviewed the work of a previous appointment or assignment, and considered whether or not they should be re-appointed to the same post or to a new position.

However, from the mid-1970s there was a gradual increase in the number of lay Principals in Catholic schools while the number of Religious was dwindling due to shortage of vocation to religious life. As the presence of the Religious in schools was fading away (Canavan, 1986, 1990b, 1993; d'Arbon, 1980; D'Orsa, 1994; Luttrell, 1992), the appraisal procedure (quality assurance measure) used by the Religious congregations could no longer be appreciated and effectively applied to a dominantly lay-staffed system. The new leadership of the CEO Sydney, therefore, needed to develop strategies and institute its own model of appraisal process.

As the schools came more and more under the leadership of lay staff, there was a corresponding need to ensure that, not only the Catholic ethos or identity was maintained, but also the quality of the staff, teaching and learning. The Religious Education curriculum had to be developed and supervised, principals and other staff appointments had to be properly selected and the program for personnel improvement needed to be designed if the Catholic schools were to survive and quality outcomes achieved.

Concern for, and commitment to quality outcomes still remained the essential goal and a major issue for the Catholic schools leaders during the 1980s. This is evident, for instance, in a statement ascribed to Br. Walter Simmons cfc, who became the Diocesan Director of Schools in 1982 after Fr. Slowey's 38 years period as Diocesan Director. In a paper circulated in 1980, Simmons is quoted to have observed:

while the 1970s battles for the overall maintenance and viability of the Catholic schools had been won, the new challenge was for the improvement of the quality of education sought by a more demanding and discriminating Catholic population (cited in Luttrell 1992, p. 178).

Simmons went on to recommend that, in order to be able to meet the new challenge "there was need for continuing review of the aims and strategies of the Catholic Programs and for evaluation of outcomes . . ." (p. 178). One of the measures taken to meet the 'new challenge' was the practice of performance appraisal, which has become known as the Personnel Performance Planning and Review (PPPR) process.

When Simmons resigned his appointment at the end of 1986, Br. Kelvin Canavan fms was appointed and designated as the Executive Director of Schools -a position he was still holding when this research was being undertaken. Br. Kelvin Canavan's leadership has been characterised by intensive researches and reviews, strategic planning and management, collaborative and instructional leadership, together with a deep interest in professional development as measures to improve and maintain the quality of personnel, and therefore, to enhance quality outcomes for teaching and learning in the school system. The continuing implementation of the PPPR designed for those in position of responsibility has been one of such efforts being made by the CEO leadership to ensure quality outcomes in the entire system.

At first, this appraisal was done by a single-person-panel who engaged the Principals in a form of self-reflection and a review to evaluate and validate their performances at their posts. This panel visited the school at specific periods to review its Religious Education program, the curriculum and administrative issues.

In a circular letter to the Systemic School Principals, the Executive Director, Br. Kelvin Canavan, is delighted with the outcomes of the implementation of the PPPR process and states thus:

One of the most rewarding aspects of my role over the last two years has been in observing the high levels of enthusiasm and professionalism with which Principals have taken up the PPPR process in our schools. This enthusiastic, professional acceptance speaks volumes about a recognition among Principals of the need for planning, for systematic support, for professional development and for strong collaborative leadership in managing the extensive changes we face in education throughout the 1990s (Canavan, 1992 in a Circular Letter ED/174, p. 1).

In a further development, Principals and other school executives, apparently happy with the outcomes of their panel-appraisal process, requested that the CEO provide a similar process for the appraisal of the individual schools and the entire system. They were requesting a process that could give them the confidence and assurance that what



they were doing in the schools was of the required standard and quality.

Meanwhile, the NSW Government passed a new Education Reform Act in 1990. This Act allowed non-government schools to form into a system of their own for the purposes of Registration and Accreditation by the Government. The Act also increased the demands for schools, (particularly the Catholic school system), to be accountable not only to the Catholic Church, but also to the Government, the parent groups, the students and the wider community. In this case, it became necessary that there be a systematic process by which the Catholic Education system could account for the funds received from government, and also account for the quality of the curriculum offered in the schools, as well as the quality of staff and facilities available at each school. That organised or systemic process has resulted in the current Educational Audit Process of the CEO, Sydney.

### **1.7 The Current Quality Assurance Practice in the System**

It should be recalled that the history of the panel appraisal system for school Principals dates back to 1975 when it was first introduced. In 1989, a task force was formed to evaluate that existing appraisal process and to seek more effective ways in which the process can formally link development of schools and personnel with 'accountability'.

During the years 1992 and 1993, the CEO carried out further consultations with various stakeholder groups in the system and the result culminated in the formulation and implementation of the current package of Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO. These comprise:

- Personnel Performance Planning and Review (PPPR);
- School Review and Development (SRD);
- Educational Audit; and
- Contract Renewal/Review Consultation (CR/RC).

The PPPR is an annual one-to-one process of goal setting and review. The process is the continual review and development of leadership and management practices within a

school by the people in the management position. Development and accountability are the main elements or ingredients in this process (CEO, 1994, 1995).

The aim of PPPR is twofold:

- to enhance the skills and effectiveness of Principals, executive staff and teachers holding Positions of Special Responsibility in schools, both as individual leaders and as leadership teams; and
- to provide a forum for constructive feedback about performance and achievement.

Here two main aspects or items stand out -development and accountability.

The PPPR also has a link with the School Review and Development (SRD) Process in that, both have to do with development and accountability in terms of the schools' activities.

The SRD (including the Educational Audit), as an aspect of the Quality Assurance Processes, focuses on the effectiveness and quality outcomes of schools. It has been designed and made mandatory by the CEO Sydney, that each systemic Catholic school community undertakes the SRD Processes at least once every four years.

This is built into the Strategic Management Cycle for each systemic school in Sydney Archdiocese.

The agenda for the SRD Processes includes to:

- clarify the core purposes, values and mission of Catholic schools;
- review all aspects of school functioning;
- develop, publicise and implement long and short term plans for ongoing maintenance and improvement in learning and teaching;
- provide for accountability to the school Community, Church, CEO and Government; and
- be effective, harmonious and identifiably Catholic places of learning where the expectations, needs and aspirations of all involved in the education of young Australian people are capable of being realised

(Ensuring Quality, CEO, 1995, p. 4).

The CR/RC reviews the personal contribution and effectiveness of the individual in his/her leadership role in relation to the progressive achievement of the goals and purposes of the school. On behalf of the Archbishop of Sydney, the Executive Director of Schools employs nearly 5,000 people in the Catholic school system. Among them are the Principals who are employed on contract.

The contents in the agenda for the CR/RC includes to:

- gather relevant data on which the Regional Director can make an informed recommendation about contract renewal and on which the Executive Director can base decisions regarding the renewal of contracts for Principals and School Executives;
- enhance the skills and effectiveness of school leaders by providing sound data on which to base an Action Plan incorporating aspects of Catholic school leadership and management to be addressed by the Principal during the ensuring contract period; and
- provide a structure for leaders of systemic schools in the Archdiocese of Sydney to demonstrate accountability to the Church, to the community and to Government (CEO, 1995).

Further details on the implementation of these Processes will be explored in the next chapter on literature review. The next section describes the Strategic Management Plan (SMP) system and its role in the history and development of quality assurance practices in the Catholic Education system in Sydney.

### **1.8 The Strategic Management Plan (SMP)**

Strategies or strategic plans usually describe actions, or what is planned to take place in order to achieve some goals. Strategic plans facilitate activities in the pursuit of the mission of an organisation or establishment (Canavan, 1995; Quinn, 1980; Steane, 1995). The Strategic Management Plan (SMP) embodies the philosophy of the Quality Assurance Processes and sets the parameters for their implementation. The SMP of the

CEO contained in *Sydney Catholic Schools: Towards 2005* was launched in 1995. A diagram illustrating stages in the Strategic Management Plan cycle for the CEO executives and the schools is provided as an Appendix B.

The SMP is designed by the CEO to complement school-level planning and provide leadership across the Catholic school system in Sydney. As Canavan (1995) points out, the Management Plan has to 'reflect the collective needs of the systemic schools' (p. 21). Such collective needs are identified through the policy statements of the SACS Board and also through consultations with the various stakeholders in the Catholic education system.

The CEO, on its own part, has set up a list of 'priorities' in which it spells out the strategies for achievement of goals in accordance with the Mission and Vision Statements of the Sydney Archdiocesan Catholic Schools (SACS) Board. In a ten-point statement of intent, the CEO pledged commitment to providing quality education for students in the Catholic systemic schools (CEO, 1995, pp 11-20). It is in its effort to fulfil that responsibility and meet the original goals that the CEO Sydney has embarked on the new management philosophy and practice known as 'Quality Assurance Processes' which forms the topic for this present Study.

Until late 1995 the term 'Quality Assurance' was not in common use by the CEO. The different processes named earlier in this work were known and treated individually and under their individual titles. It was later on that the CEO found the term 'Quality Assurance', originally a business term, convenient and suitable to explain or describe what they are doing to ensure quality outcome in the Catholic Education system (Interview with the Executive Director of Schools, 8/1/97).

However, the current Processes by the CEO are still at the early stages. During 1994, Paul Harney and Bruce Callaghan & Associates were enlisted by the CEO to carry out an evaluation of the pilot implementation of the SRD process. The results showed that all "stakeholder groups interviewed indicated satisfaction with the SRD program" (Evaluation Report, 1994, p. 16). In 1998 a major review of Cycle 1 of the SRD

Processes was carried out (Clark, 1998).

Although the overall reports from the two reviews were positive, more studies are still required to identify and clarify the various components of the Processes and make their implementation more effective for greater outcomes.

As the implementation of these Quality Assurance Processes involves the collaboration of a diversity of stakeholder groups in the Catholic Education system, it should be expected the diverse stakeholders will have a diversity of opinion and exhibit a diversity of attitudes towards the Processes. More studies will be needed to assess these diversity of opinions, attitudes or perceptions to make sure that they are not at variant to the aims and objectives of the Processes. More studies could also identify any factors that are assisting and/or hindering the effective implementation of the Processes. The present project is, therefore, not only appropriate, but also necessary in order to improve the effectiveness of this management practice that has become a permanent feature as well as the culture of educational leadership.

The statement of the problem for this project and the explanation of some key terms are presented and discussed in the next section.

### **1.9 Research Problem and Explanation of Key Terms**

The title of this project is, *Quality Assurance Processes: The Nature, Outcomes and Effectiveness of the implementation of the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney*. The basic research problem that is inherent in this present project and as deduced by this researcher is summarised and stated in the following questions:

1. What are the perceptions of some significant stakeholders in the Catholic Education System about the nature, outcomes and the effectiveness of the implementation of the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney?
2. What factors are assisting and/or hindering the effective implementation of these

processes both in the CEO, Sydney and the school levels?

The following sub-questions were then formulated as research questions:

1. What is the nature of the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney?
2. How and why are they so designed?
3. What have been some of the Outcomes of the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney in the first few years of their implementation?
4. Who are the key players or some of the significant stakeholders in the Quality Assurance Processes of CEO, Sydney, and what are their perceptions (awareness) about the Effectiveness of the Implementation of the Processes?
5. As a result of the analysis and evaluation of the nature, outcomes and effectiveness of the Quality Assurance Processes, what are the factors assisting or hindering the effective implementation of these Processes?

There are some key terms or words in the title of this project that are crucial for the proper comprehension of the present study, but these may have more than one meaning in ordinary day-to-day understanding. They could be understood and/or interpreted by different readers in different ways that may detract from the aim and intention of the research study. To enhance clarity and consistency, therefore, it was decided to offer brief explanations for such terms or words. The key terms that need explanation were identified to include: *Nature, Outcomes, Effectiveness, and Quality Assurance Processes*.

#### *Nature.*

The word *Nature* has a complex usage and application. In the New Oxford English Dictionary *Nature* is explained in the following ways: In terms of created things, nature

refers to animals, plants and other events that are not made or caused by people. People often refer to the forest, bush, or sea as 'natural habitat'. In terms of humans, nature can refer to the character or the way people behave. In general, the nature of something is its basic quality or character.

In philosophical (metaphysical) terms, nature may be described in one sense, as the 'generation' of growing things; ie, an inherent 'something', out of which a thing begins to grow. In another sense nature means the primary material of which an artefact is made and which cannot in its raw state be transformed by its own power. Nature could also be described as the essential character of a thing or being, a permanent property or properties, some inborn character or disposition of a person, a thing, an organisation or a program. Thus it can be said that it is an inborn, a permanent property, or it is the nature of the rock to be solid and hard.

For the purposes of this present study, however, the word *Nature* is used to refer to those basic qualities or characteristics of the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO Sydney. Thus, in asking questions about the *nature* of these Processes, it is asking about their essential character, in-borne disposition or permanent properties. The research project, therefore, sought to know if and how the significant stakeholders in the Catholic education system in Sydney perceived the *nature* (the permanent properties) of the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO Sydney. It sought to know how aware those stakeholders are of the properties of the processes. Such awareness will point to how they understand the in-borne disposition and permanent properties of the processes.

### Outcomes.

As a term *Outcome* simply means 'the result of', 'as a result of' or 'the consequence of' some action or some event taking place. Outcomes may be expressed as expected, desired, or intended outcomes of a particular program. Outcomes are described as 'expected, desired, or intended' if they happen as a program or process was initially designed. On the other hand they can also be expressed as unexpected, unintended, or undesired outcomes. In this case, outcomes are described as "unexpected",

“undesired”, or “unintended”, if they happen contrarily to what the particular program or process was originally designed to achieve.

In this present study, the term *Outcomes* is understood to refer to what has been achieved or what are achievable through the implementation of the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO in the Catholic schools system.

### *Effectiveness.*

According to the English language dictionary, to ‘effect’ means ‘to accomplish, to bring about’ something that was desired or aimed at. Thus effectiveness involves or implies ‘accomplishment’ or ‘achievement’ in the operation of a system, an organisation or a program.

Halsall (1998) believes that effectiveness of a program or action should be judged on how the program or action achieves particular aims for which the action or program was taken or conducted, and quotes Barnard (1938) who maintains that ‘an action is effective if it accomplishes its specific aim’ (p. 5).

Scheerens and Bosker (1997) speaking in terms of Economics, defined effectiveness as ‘the extent to which the desired level of output is achieved against the lowest possible cost’ (p. 4). They go on to explain that, in a school or educational institution situation, inputs would include the pupils or students with some given characteristics like material/or financial aids, while output would include pupils’ attainment at the end of schooling. The effectiveness of the turnover or transformation process within the school, therefore, refers to all the instruction methods, curriculum choices and the organisational preconditions which make it possible for pupils to acquire knowledge.

After sampling various attempts by various authors to define effectiveness, Zammuto (1982) came to the definition of an organisational effectiveness as:

. . . the attainment of goals, goal attainment without imposing strains on the organisational system, exploitation of the organisations’ environment for resources, and in terms of meeting criteria set by the multiple constituencies of an organisation (p. 22).



All of these attempts at definition point in general to the fact that a program or project undertaken can be said to be *effective* if it causes the desired result(s). Or the project is effective if it causes a telling or striking effect on those who are expected to be affected by such a program or project. Hence effectiveness is synonymous with achievement of the striking and desired aims or goals.

In this present study, *effectiveness* is viewed and discussed in terms of the factors assisting and/or hindering the effective implementation of the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney. The study will examine how, and whether or not the implementation of the Processes may have resulted in the desired aims or have caused striking effects on the Catholic schools and the CEO staff members. It will then consider and assess the factors and circumstances that have caused or influenced such results.

### *Quality Assurance Processes.*

In English language usage the *quality* of a thing or person refers to the 'attribute', 'character', 'mark', 'value', or special 'property' of that thing or that person. Quality makes a person or a thing stand out, distinct and desirable for that which makes the thing or person stand out. The word *assurance* refers to the idea of guaranteeing or making sure of something. The word *process* refers to some 'action', 'movement', 'activity' or 'procedure' being carried out or to be carried out to ensure or guarantee some 'special thing takes place.

Put together, therefore, the term '*Quality Assurance Processes*' is understood to refer to the movements, the procedures or activities through which these special properties, attributes, values or characters of an organisation or establishment are maintained and the quality of service and product guaranteed.

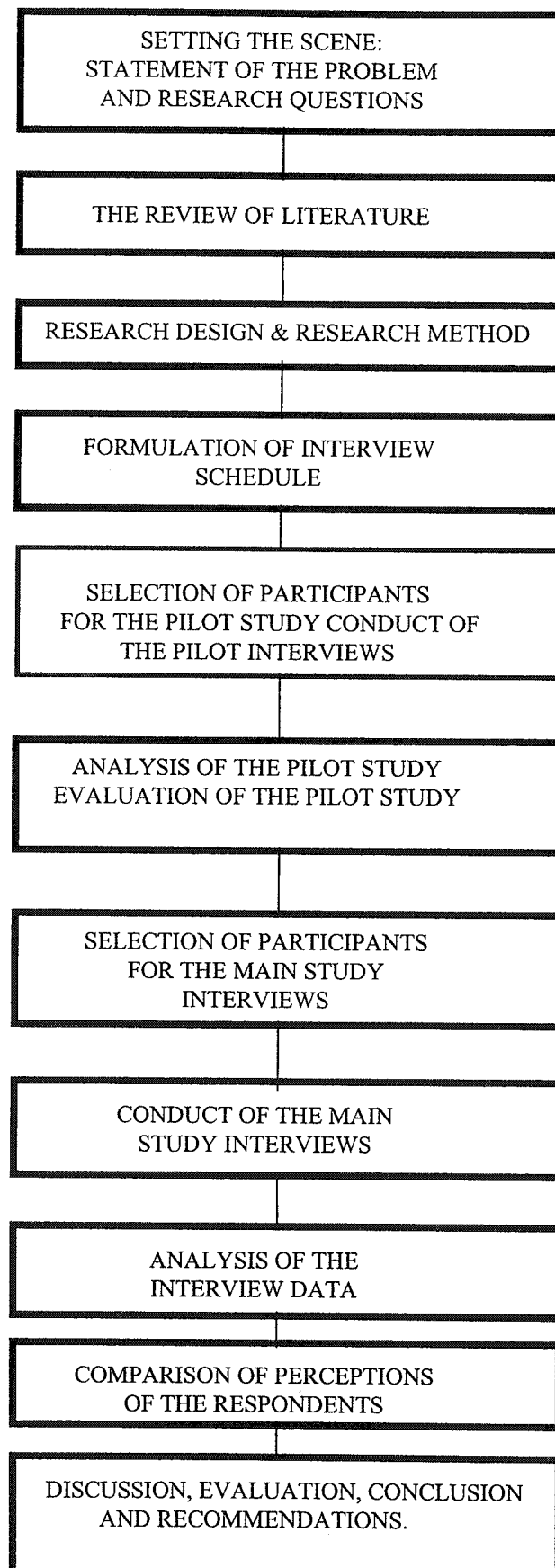
In this project, the term '*Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO Sydney*', refers to those special movements, procedures or activities that the CEO carries out in the effort to maintain and guarantee quality outcomes in teaching and learning.

### 1.10 Scope and Purpose of the Study

While this study is intended to have generalisable implications in terms of information and application of the results, it is, however, conducted with special reference to the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney. The study will determine and analyse the perceptions of key players in the Quality Assurance Processes about the nature, outcomes and the factors affecting the effectiveness of the implementation of the Processes. The key players or significant stakeholders will include a selection of senior CEO staff members at both Central and Regional offices, the principals and assistant principals, together with 3-4 teachers from each of the three Primary and three Secondary schools selected across the three Regions of Catholic School System in Sydney. The study will concern itself with only those professional and organisational issues relating to the implementation of the Processes and no personal matters will be discussed.

The expectation here is that by carrying out this present project the researcher will be able to identify and clarify the positive and negative aspects of these Quality Assurance Processes as they existed in 1996; identify factors that assist or hinder the progress of the Processes; and then recommend ways in which future implementation or approaches can lead to the achievement of greater quality outcomes in the Catholic education system. It is expected that this study will contribute to a great extent to research in education in general and to the emerging management philosophy and practice of quality assurance processes.

Figure 1.1 represents the overview and the overall organisation of the project.

**FIGURE 1.1: OVERVIEW AND ORGANISATION OF THE PROJECT.**

### 1.11 Summary

The purpose of this first Chapter was to set the scene for the Study. In doing so, the present writer has traced a brief historical background and development of the quality assurance practices in Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Sydney. This was accomplished by identifying and discussing the different events and circumstances that point to efforts by the Catholic school leaders to ensure quality outcomes in Catholic education over the century. This has provided the rationale for the present study.

From the foregoing, it can be deduced that the commitment to quality outcomes in the Catholic Education system has a long history. It is clear that there have always been some form of 'checking up', 'inspecting' or some other means of ensuring that required standards were met and maintained in the Catholic schools in Sydney. While there was not an organised school system as is known today until the late 1960s (Praetz, 1980, 1982), it is evident that some measures (sometimes *ad hoc*) were always employed to ensure quality outcomes in Catholic education since the establishment of the first school in Sydney in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Bezzina *et al.* (1996) must have shared this view when they titled their article: *Quality Assurance in Catholic Schools: Neither Alien nor New*.

The brief historical background has revealed how the Catholic schools in Sydney have passed through various conditions and circumstances in development, and the endeavours to achieve quality outcomes during the past century. In the process, the leadership wing -the CEO- has also grown and matured. As D'Orsa (1994) observes, the CEO has "grown into a complex organisation operating within a matrix management structure where collaboration between regional and central directors is essential to effective leadership" (p. 69).

This growth however, is not without some challenges to those responsible for Catholic Education in Sydney as the endeavour to achieve quality outcomes. One of the challenges these can face would be how to ensure that the complexity of the

management structure does not overshadow the original goals for which the Catholic schools were established.

It is possible that an attempt to reorganise or make a system flexible may become a hindrance to success, rather than a means by which desired goals are achieved in an organisation. Evidence from literature on organisations shows that, while trying to adapt to new structures, there may be some accidental diversion from the original goals of the organisations (Canavan, 1986, 1988; Capra, 1982; Betts, 1991; Handy, 1991, 1994; Senge, 1992), and this could adversely affect the *quality outcomes* of such organisations.

As the CEO, Sydney, endeavours to adopt modern ways of ensuring quality outcomes in the education system, it should be realised that changes and reshaping are involved. Care must be taken, therefore, in implementing the quality assurance processes, so that the CEO and all the stakeholder groups do not become “enslaved by the system, but convert the occasion to a blessing rather than a woe” for both the individuals and the system (Handy, 1991, p. 141).

Next in Chapter Two, the review of literature will lead to further understanding of philosophy behind the design and implementation of the current processes by the CEO, and show if and how they are in context with other quality assurance practices in other organisations and educational institutions.

## CHAPTER TWO.

### THE REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### 2.1 Introduction

In Chapter One, a brief historical background to the development and practice of the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO Sydney, was presented. The different components of these Processes as well as the agenda and goals for their implementation were outlined. The Statement of the Problem and Research Questions for the present study were also identified.

In the present Chapter, the review of related literature is carried out as a means of “getting further to the frontier of the particular study” (Borg & Gall, 1989, p.116) in this case, the field of Quality Assurance in education. While the title of this present study lays special emphasis on the Nature, Outcomes and Effectiveness of the Implementation of the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney, the review of literature has been designed to reflect both the local and international trends and features (Woodhouse, 1996) of the current movements and practices for quality assurance in education as well as in business and manufacturing sectors. The review of literature sets out to define and explain the issues on: *Quality* in general, *Total Quality Management (TQM)* and *Quality Assurance Processes* as these apply to the business sector, education systems in general and the Sydney Catholic education system in particular. In this way it was possible to identify and draw some parallels with existing practices and, thereby, approach this study project in the context of current practices and knowledge in the subject area. Accordingly this review of literature is to be presented under the following headings:

Defining Quality;  
 The notion and definition of Quality Assurance;  
 Total Quality Management (TQM) in the Business Sector;  
 Quality Assurance in manufacturing and service industries:  
 'The ISO 9000 Series';  
 Total Quality Management (TQM) in the Education Sector.  
 The notion of Quality Assurance in Education;  
 Examples of Quality Assurance practices in some education systems; and  
 The implementation of Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney;

## 2.2 Defining Quality

While this research project is not specifically on the word 'quality', the word is used frequently in the study, and, therefore, its proper understanding and usage is crucial for the understanding of this study. In view of this it was decided to begin the literature review by finding out how various writers define or explain 'quality'. The natural question that arises, therefore, would be: *What is quality?* and this does not have such an easy or ready answer.

The New International Dictionary of English Language in part defines quality as: "... *that determinateness which is one with the Being of the object: if the quality is changed, the Being is changed and vice versa*". The New Oxford English Dictionary defines quality as: "*the character of something, hence degree or grade of excellence, etc. possessed by a thing*". This definition fits the everyday use of the term 'quality'.

In other uses of the term, various writers have attempted variously to define *quality* (Crosby, 1979, 1984; Deming, 1986, 1988; Garvin 1988; Juran, 1989; Montague, 1994; Harvey & Green, 1993), and have come to accept the fact that it is difficult if not impossible, to have a straightforward and single definition that fits with every individual's situation, belief or conviction.

Garvin (1988) alluded to the difficulty in defining quality and remarked that “quality is an unusually slippery concept, easy to visualise and yet exasperatingly difficult to define” (p. 11). This means that there is an inherent difficulty in understanding, and therefore, applying this term in ordinary daily usage. The difficulty has caused some confusion among managers who need to assess the quality of their product and services; and even among professors who need to assess the quality of individual research, researchers and scientific reports in the academic field.

Montague (1994) has observed how writers and even guest speakers on the term ‘quality’ are generally at pains to arrive at a definition of this term or concept - quality. According to Montague, the difficulty in the definition, the use and understanding of the word ‘quality’, is due to the fact that “the word has a variety of meanings and implications” (p. 2). *Quality* implies different things to different people in their different conditions.

Montague goes further to explain that the meaning or implications of the term would depend on whether it is used in the *absolute sense* or in the *relative sense*.

Used in the *absolute sense*, quality refers to a product or service that exhibits the highest possible standard, and therefore, that product or service is seen as having achieved excellence. In this sense “quality can be applied to our everyday usage to describe expensive material or items such as car, furniture, . . .” (p. 3).

Used in the *relative sense*, quality may refer to the standard reached in or expected of a management situation. In other words, when a product or service meets the laid down specifications as a result of the “quality” of management, then the result is relative to conditions or the specifications. Of course, such specified standards are pre-determined to meet the customer’s or client’s requirement. So, a management firm or organisation whose product or service consistently meets specified standards and requirements is regarded as having quality in its system of management. Hence, the meaning of quality is



relative to, or dependent on those pre-determined standards or requirements.

In their effort to define quality in the higher education sector Harvey and Green (1993) have given an elaborate description of the meaning and usage of *quality*, and so make useful contributions towards a clearer definition of the term. To begin with, these authors see quality in general as a relative concept that can mean different things to different people. Hence, they make the remark that:

quality means different things to different people, indeed the same person may adopt different conceptualisation at different moments. . . . There are varieties of 'stakeholders' in higher education, including . . . government and its funding agencies. . . . Each has a different perspective on quality. This is not a different perspective on the same thing but different perspective on different things with the same label

(Harvey & Green, 1993 p. 10).

Harvey and Green go further to state five other ways of viewing quality to include: quality as *exceptional*; quality as *perfection or consistency*; quality as *fitness for purpose*; quality as *value for money*; and quality as *transformation* (p.11).

Viewed or understood as *exceptional*, 'quality' confers a notion of special achievement associated with distinctiveness, and a capacity to exceed high or minimum standard. This notion refers to quality as something special. Some creative works of art or writings may be seen as exceptional, special and distinctive if such works exceed laid down quality standards.

These authors opine that 'quality' viewed or understood as *perfection or consistency* is based on the notion that good processes put in place will always make for the prevention of error in production. In this case the approach to quality focuses on the process, and aims at meeting all set specifications in any situation and "*getting it right the first time*" or with "*zero defect*" (p. 15). This notion or approach to quality can be applied to the school setting where the school consistently meets the requirements of review processes at the first attempt.

Next, the concept of quality as *fitness for purpose* relates to the extent to which a product or service is suited to its purpose. Harvey and Green describe this concept as “a definition of quality as functional rather than being exceptional” (p. 16). These authors further express some concern about defining quality in this way. They opine that *Fitness for purpose* will raise the question ‘whose purpose?’ and how fitness is assessed? (p. 17).

According to Harvey and Green, when quality is approached or viewed *in terms of value for money*, the approach focuses on performance indicators. In this case the *value* is added by the process in itself, and it performs to achieve high standard. Quality at this level, is assessed in terms of quantitative improvement. In a school situation, an increase in the number top 100% results in the HSC or the number of 1st class graduands in each year’s examination resulted could quantitatively indicate quality improvement.

Lastly, Harvey and Green offer a conception or view of quality as a *transformation*. This view may be similar to the view as “*value for money*”, but quality viewed as *transformation* is a bit different in that this is said to be rooted in the notion of ‘*Change of Form*’, a sort of change that is not measurable quantitatively as would the *value for money*. The notion was further explained with this classic example offered by these authors is that “ice is transformed into water and eventually steam if it experiences an increase in temperature. While the increase in temperature can be measured the *transformation* involves a qualitative change” (p. 24) that cannot be measured quantitatively.

In the context of education, a change of attitude or a sign of improved self-confidence in a student who has spent some time doing a course of studies can be an example of the notion of quality as a *transformation*. Ashcroft and Foreman-Peck (1996) refer to this as a developmental view of quality which allows qualitative and quantitative change to be facilitated and measured.

Woodhouse (1996) observes that the definition or view of quality as *fitness for purposes* is the most commonly accepted view for institutions because it allows the institutions to define their *purpose* in their mission and objectives, and they demonstrate their quality by achieving whatever mission they set before themselves. It follows also that the institutions' purposes and the notion of *fitness* would vary according to their missions and objectives. However, Woodhouse suggests that this approach to quality may be better handled for great benefit if and when all stakeholders or key players in such institutions are involved in decision-making in issues that affect the institutions. In that way, all the stakeholders or key players will be in agreement as to what such institutions define as *fitness for (their) purpose*.

Whatever the difficulties involved in trying to define 'quality' as a term, even as the above efforts can testify, the fact remains that it is a value universally sought after in all sectors of the human society. This is seen in the fact that various individuals and groups, both in business and education sectors are ever showing and promoting interest in *quality outcomes* or *quality standards* of what they offer or receive. For example, it was to promote interest in quality that in 1962, Japan established a prestigious Quality Prize and named it after their teacher Edward W. Deming (Deming, 1986; Garvin, 1988; Paine, Turner, & Pryke 1992). In the U S, the Malcohbm Baldrige National Quality Award (MBNQA) was established in 1987 when they realised the need to instil quality standards into the manufacturing sector and their market economy.

What could be deduced from the various attempts at definitions and explanations given above is that the term *quality* is used variously to refer to the grade, the standard, the value or the worth of a thing, a being or a situation. The meaning and understanding attached to it in each case would depend on the circumstance and the sense in which it is applied. Cuttance (1995a) notes that nearly all of these definitions "explicitly link the quality of a product or service to the needs of the user or customer" (p. 12). The implication for this observation or remark is that the term *quality* is, and should be used as a relative term to describe a product, a service, a situation or an event. In which case, a

particular product may meet the need of a customer depending on the circumstances.

In relation to the present study, Catholic Education system would be expected to meet the needs of the 'customer' and demonstrate the presence of quality by consistently keeping to the standard and fulfilling the purposes for which Catholic schools were established.

In the next section the review of literature relates to the definition and the notion of the term '*quality assurance*'.

### 2.3 The Notion and Definition of Quality Assurance

In recent times, *Quality Assurance* has become almost a household phrase or term as management philosophy and practice not only in business, but also in other fields of management including educational institutions and schools. A search through the library catalogue or the Internet reveals countless literatures (eg. ERIC and Austrum data base) by numerous authors such as Cuttance (1994b, 1995a, 1995b); Harvey and Green (1993); Kruithof, (1993); Piper (1993); and Tan San Yee (1993) among others, who endeavour to explore this rather new and emerging area. Apparently, there has not yet emerged a simple and straightforward definition of 'quality assurance' that wins a general acceptance from all writers. There may be as many versions of definitions for quality assurance as there are the number of authors, even though they may not be very different in substance or content. It was therefore, decided to present and discuss only but a few of the following eye-catching attempts at definitions that are considered suitable for the purposes of this present study.

Cuttance (1994b) defined *Quality Assurance* as that which:

refers to all the planned, systematic strategies and actions which are designed specifically to guarantee that the process is monitored and remains on target at all times (p. 5).

Piper (1993) defines it as:

the total of those mechanisms and procedures adopted to assure a given quality or the continued improvement of quality which embodies the planning, defining, encouraging, assessing and controlling quality (p. 5).

Tan San Yee (1993) defines it as:

all the planned and systematic actions necessary to provide adequate confidence that a product or service will satisfy given requirements for quality (p. 3).

Common to all the above examples of definition, is the idea of a planned or organised system, which is the central factor for ensuring quality in a given establishment or organisation. A combination of or each of the above can represent an acceptable definition for *quality assurance*.

*Quality Assurance* must not be confused with *Quality Management*. These are two different, but complementary aspects of a framework for achieving a quality outcome in any organisation (Cuttance, 1994b). Because *quality management* and *quality assurance* are so vital and so complementarily intertwined in the operation of an organisation, it is often difficult to see that they are different. Together, quality assurance and quality management work to ensure that an organisation remains constant in providing services or products that meet or exceed customers' requirements (Montague, 1994).

Quality assurance is a process by which all the processes in an organisation are assured under a quality management system. Two types of activities take place within the quality assurance functioning, namely, the auditing activity and the developmental activity.

Quality management, on the other hand, focuses on the actions and structures necessary to manage quality and, therefore, determines goods or services that best satisfy or exceed customers' needs and expectations (Cuttance, 1995b; Kruithof, 1993; Montague, 1994). Quality management deals with every aspect of an organisation ranging from human resources to financial processes, to staff relationship, to manufacturing and delivery system.

In the auditing activity, concern is on verifying whether there is conformance and compliance with established standards for the procedures and the process; and whether the finished products or services meet these designed standards. In this way, the quality system itself is subjected to scrutiny and self-appraisal (technically known as *auditing*).

In the developmental activity, quality assurance is concerned with the regular examination of the design, the product, system and the process for the purposes of ensuring effectiveness. In other words, quality assurance at this level focuses on the performance of the system or process with the aim of improving and maximising that performance (Cuttance, 1995a).

Harvey and Green (1993) warn that “Quality Assurance is not about specifying the standards or specifications against which to measure or control quality” (p. 19). Rather, “quality assurance, is about ensuring that there are the mechanisms, procedures and processes in place to ensure that the desired quality, however that is defined and measured, is delivered” (p. 19). These authors also warned against the assumption or temptation to believe that, where the quality assurance mechanisms exist, there quality can be assured. The existence of mechanisms or procedures cannot automatically produce quality in the product or service. On the other hand, the fact that quality assurance procedures are employed in or for a system or company must not necessarily be seen as an indication that there is something intrinsically wrong in the company or system (Cuttance 1994b). Rather, it should be seen as means to an end. It is better to have a system in place for a check rather than to operate without some form of *quality assurance* or guarantee.

Gahani (1993) has traced the history of the development of the application of quality measures in management, and makes us believe that Frederick Taylor had earlier introduced the idea in the 1920s. Taylor’s approach to quality was rather scientific. (The term ‘Scientific’ is to be understood to mean a method or approach based upon well-

established facts, and obeying a well-established law). He believed that it was the responsibility of a specialised inspection unit to see that there was '*quality*' in the product or service. It is believed that the concept of inspecting the quality of outputs in management process grew from Taylor's approach. His approach was later to be rejected by the post-World War II quality exponents, and is now discredited.

When talking about quality and development of quality (later on quality assurance) in business from the post-World War II period, the name of Edward W. Deming is almost always mentioned. Deming was an American Business Consultant who was (and still is) widely credited with leading the Japanese in their post-World War II economic revolution (Deming, 1986; Walton, 1989, 1990; Garvin, 1991; Paine *et al.*, 1992; Vallence and Wallace, 1993). Deming strongly believed that the basic cause of set-back or failure in industry was that top management failed to manage. In his popular 14 Points program, Deming pointed out the expectations and responsibilities of top managers in industries if quality improvement was to be achieved. For Deming, it is not enough for everyone to do his or her best in the company, industry or any organisation. People must know what they are actually doing.

Deming (1986) was arguing that quality comes from improvement of the production process and he stated that "productivity is the by-product of quality and of doing the job right the first time" (p. 18). According to Deming, the traditional method of inspecting the product at the end line only results in scraps, downgrading and reworking. On the other hand, Deming regarded the inspection of small samples of products for the purposes of control, as an acceptable practice. Such is the job of professionals only, aimed to allow "vendor and customer to compare their instruments and test to learn to speak the same language" (p. 30). The implication here is that, there is a need to have a standardised measurement and design whereby quality requirements are determined, met and guaranteed in a product or service.

The issues concerning performance standard, measurement and conforming or complying

with requirements in quality assurance were also part of Crosby's (1984) interest. Crosby has directed his message to managers at the top in industries and service organisations. Crosby (1984) wants the top managers to change their attitudes and perceptions about quality. According to Crosby, the way to do that is to employ what he calls the "Four Absolutes" (p. 58) of quality improvement process. These 'absolutes' recommend that: quality has to be defined as conformance to requirements, not as goodness (p. 64); the system for causing quality is *prevention*, and not an *appraisal* system (p. 73); the performance standard must be "Zero Defect", and not "that is close enough" (p. 84); and, the "measurement of quality is the price of non-conformance, not indexes" (p. 85). All of these are designed to answer four basic questions, namely:

*What is quality? What system is needed to produce quality?*

*What performance standard should be used?*

*What measurement system is required?*

It is Crosby's teaching and a belief that quality is free and that quality can be achieved without tears. The point in Crosby's theory is that, if quality would be improved, the total cost of a manufacturing company falls while the company's profitability increases or rises. Reworking of any product or service is seen also by Crosby to be costly and so must be avoided by doing it right the first time.

Juran (1986, 1989) was another great American who has contributed much to the quality assurance discussions. Like his counterpart Deming, Juran is known to have visited Japan and influenced Japan's quality revolution process through his lectures and talks. As we have seen already above, Juran (1989, p. 15) defined quality as what is "fitness for use". This implies that those who choose to use a product or service should be able to count on such product or service for whatever they needed that product or service. In other words, the person(s) who acquire the product or service must be able to put the same to use. A further implication is that the manufacturer or provider of the product or service should process the purchased items to meet the demands or needs of the customers. Juran's quality material that has "fitness for use" has five dimensions namely: the design dimension; conformance dimension; availability dimension; safety dimension and the



dimension of field use (Juran and Gryna, 1980; Juran, 1989). Perhaps the most popular of Juran's contributions to the quality movement is his famous three-step-process, commonly known as Juran's Trilogy. The three-step-process consists of:

*Quality Planning;*

*Quality Control; and*

*Quality Improvement.*

*Quality planning* takes care of all the stages in the process to ensure that the end product will meet the needs of the customers. *Quality control* involves the processes of determining or detecting those components of the product that are not up to the standard. It employs the method of testing and inspecting the product or service by professionals. Often this is done (the old traditional way) at the end of the production and it depends a great deal on feedback or reactions from customers. Naturally, following this would be the *Quality Improvement*. Through identification of needs after having received feedback from customers and diagnosing causes of problems, the industry or organisation constantly deals with change performance in order to bring about a new level of quality. Juran's doctrine advocated that quality planning, quality control and quality improvement should all be integrated into management. Here, he emphasised that it is senior management that can bring about quality breakthrough, rather than the operational work force. In essence, Crosby (1984), Deming (1986) and Juran (1989) are in agreement that it is the responsibility of the top management to bring about change in an organisation. This vested responsibility does not imply that the managers will do everything by themselves. Rather, it means that top managers must know how to get everybody to be aware of, and be involved in what they are expected to do and do their best in their different areas.

In his contribution to the quality improvement process, Feigenbaum (1983) advocated that a quality control program could be widened to include such functions as purchasing, marketing, process supervision as well as mechanical inspection. In this way, there would be an inter-play of quality activities throughout the organisation. It was this concept of

quality by Feigenbaum that led to the introduction of term 'Total' into the business and manufacturing quality language. It developed into 'Total Quality Control' (TQC), and has now developed further into what has become popularly known as 'Total Quality Management' (TQM), practised in both business and education sectors as this study will indicate (Vallence and Wallace, 1993).

In relation to the present study, the notion of quality assurance implies 'making sure', 'being sure' and 'assuring' that quality outcomes are achieved in the Catholic Education system.

#### **2.4 Total Quality Management (TQM) in the Business Sector**

Total Quality Management (TQM) is becoming a popular management philosophy and practice in business and manufacturing sectors (Creech, 1994; Davidow & Uttal, 1989; Harvey & Green, 1993; Paine *et al.*, 1992). Based on the teaching of W. Edward Deming's and other fellow American statisticians, TQM was first embraced by the Japanese in their manufacturing and business industries practised as Total Quality Control (TQC). This is believed to have been a major reason behind the Japanese business success from the 1950s (Paine *et al.*, 1992, p. 6).

It has become common knowledge that this new approach to management is making it possible for companies to improve constantly the quality of their products and, at the same time, enhance the involvement and productivity of workers. TQM is all about *creating a quality culture* that is built into a management system whereby every member of staff in an organisation or school has a culture of satisfying customers. In his view Sallis (1993) sees TQM as a management process that aims always to provide the "customers with what they want, when they want it and how they want it" (p. 27).

Creech (1994) maintains that to achieve the required aim, the approach to the implementation of TQM must be based on some criteria:

the approach must be based on a quality mindset and quality orientation . . . it must be strongly humanistic to bring quality to the way employee are treated, included and inspired. It must . . . provide empowerment at all levels . . . and above all, it must be applied holistically so that its principles reach every nook and cranny of the organisation (p. 5).

Emphasis is laid here on the idea of *total involvement* of every stakeholder group in the life and services of whichever organisation is in question. Total involvement implies that in an organisation where TQM is applied, every role-player or stakeholder is important, and the roles they play, the contributions they can make are to be equally desired, acknowledged and encouraged by the management.

Harvey and Green (1993) define TQM as:

a management philosophy that means different things to different people” and therefore, “. . . can simply be summed up or described as ‘doing things properly’ (by the different people in the organisation) in order to maximise competitiveness and profit (p. 27).

Kruithof (1993) appears to summarise his definition of TQM into the following two statements:

A management philosophy that seeks continuous improvement in all the processes, products and services of an organisation. . . . (p. 3), and

An attempt to define a new understanding of Quality in terms of our old understanding, and thus the problem of defining Total Quality Management is one of defining Quality itself (p. 4).

From the above, the immediate deduction is that a single and clear-cut definition for TQM is rather difficult. Despite the apparent difficulties in developing a definition, there is a lot to be learnt and said about TQM as an approach to quality improvement.

The definition of TQM is seen to include two important conceptions that are common to the definition of quality itself, namely: the conceptions of quality as *consistency* and as *fitness for purpose* which Crosby (1984) and Harvey and Green (1993), among others,

had earlier talked about. *Consistency* as a concept of 'quality' is achieved if and when a manufacturing industry consistently produces a product according to the specified designs. The specified design may not, and does not guarantee the best quality. It is only what the organisation or system designs to produce.

However, such a design must consider and build in the concept of *fitness for purpose* of the product. Quality as *fitness for purpose* refers to products or services that meet the needs of the customers or consumers. A TQM philosophy or practice is in action when and if these two conceptions are present or practised in any organisation or system. Indeed, it is on this strength that Harvey and Green (1993) declare that "TQM provides a simple . . . full-proof solution to quality through fitness for purpose and quality assurance" (p. 28).

Creech (1994) had pointed out that "TQM is an idea whose time has come . . ." and at the same time he observed that "there is confusion over what it is, where it came from, and what it can do" (p. 2). No doubt, TQM is a broad, multi-functional concept that may only succeed as a management approach and practice if all members of the organisation have genuine commitment to quality. The organisation must build in quality right from the beginning of any process, and such must be the concern and responsibility of everyone, at every level, and in every 'functioning' of the organisation.

## **2.5 Quality Assurance in Manufacturing and Service Industries: The ISO 9000 SERIES**

The 'business world' has always known and demonstrated the need to ensure quality outcomes of their products and services. Industrial manufacturing such as the development of mechanical or electronic products is often subjected to elaborate quality procedures. And to survive a competitive global market, mass production of goods by companies usually requires highly systematic handling and commitment to standard quality requirements.

With the technological revolution and the present tempo of global and regional competition in industrial manufacturing, it became necessary to have a standardised system that could guarantee that what customers are receiving (in some way) meets some recognised specifications. The manufacturers, the industries or the service organisations could not give such a guarantee themselves. Hence, during the 1980s, a body known as International Standard Organisation (ISO) had produced some codified criteria for quality to be used in the industries. The international code is at present known as the ISO 9000 series. This is the internationally acceptable standard for the industrial accreditation certificate.

The launch of the ISO 9000 series has brought more attention and added emphasis to the issue of quality standards and has enhanced the commitment to quality control and quality assurance processes or procedures in the business industries (Cummesson, 1991). Approved companies are usually accredited and issued with the Certificate. Individual Nations may have their separate codification such as 'AS3900' for Australia. Here too, arrangements were on the way to republish these as 'AS/NZS ISO 9000' to be used where and when necessary for both Australia and New Zealand quality standard measures.

Schools and educational institutions are known to have always aimed at promoting and monitoring academic standards, and the concept of quality has been common in education even before the ISO 9000 concept. The questions then arise: what is new about Quality Assurance? In particular, what relevance has ISO 9000 with education? Is it not just a change of name or terminology?

Tan San Yee (1993) has provided what could be a possible answer to these questions in her paper *Case for Quality Assurance in ESP*. In that paper, Tan San Yee argues that in the past the effort to control or maintain quality in education - which was through inspection- was "limited and far from being objective; the approach tended to be *ad hoc*

and informal” (p. 3). In recent times this has been changing. Today, the education sector needs to implement some systematically planned and formal processes to ensure accountability and guarantee quality. Further more, due to the demand for quality or excellence in the industries and business sectors, it is becoming common place to find companies teaming up in partnership with educational institutions or schools in their efforts to meet their customers’ needs. In that case, the ISO 9000 series for such companies or industries would reflect the quality standards of the partner-institutions.

The International Management Centres (IMC) in the UK is one of the few higher educational institutions in the world to seek and obtain a formally accredited Quality Assurance system (Peters & Wills, 1998). The predictions therefore, are that more and more educational systems will be adopting or adapting to the ISO 9000 series or are seeking a formula for accreditation and certification that is similar to the ISO 9000 series as used in industries. Such will not be a surprise, given the increasing demand from various stakeholders and interest groups for education systems to demonstrate commitment to quality. Yorke (1999, p. 22) expresses surprise that despite what he describes as “a flurry of interest in the potential of ISO 9000 for institutional quality assurance in the early 1990s, little has been done . . .” Yorke draws attention to some advantages or high points in applying the ISO 9000 for educational accreditation to include the facts that:

- in the ISO 9000 approach, the institution is subject to follow-up visits by assessors which takes place without any prior notification;
- the ISO 9000 approach is economical of resources, and could be operated with minimal use of practising academics . . . ; and
- this approach may serve to provide evidence that an institution has a soundly grounded approach to the assurance of quality and standards, and can answer the question “Are things being done right?” (p. 22).

However, Cuttance (1994b) had earlier warned that the presence of the certification

formula, whether it is ISO 9000 or any other system, does not automatically instil 'quality' into the system or product. Rather, the certification can only suggest that quality may be guaranteed if the manufacturers and or the service providers follow those procedures and requirements of the 'certification bodies'. It is not expected to be different in the educational institutions or organisations. Notwithstanding Cuttance's point and caution, this study believes that there something to be gained in having a system of certification such as the ISO 9000 or its equivalent in education as a guiding principle, rather than nothing at all.

The ISO 9000 is the most recognised common standard for certification in the (business) world (Sheahan, 1995). The ISO 9000 provides a benchmark for the business industries to develop their individual quality standards. The rationale for advocating such a certification or its equivalent is that, a common standard or guiding principle such as ISO 9000 could serve as a benchmark for determining and maintaining an acceptable level of quality control in the Education system, just as it has been the case in the business sector. Indeed, this is precisely why a form of quality assurance system is desirable and recommended for present-day education sector.

Again, it can be argued that since education is part of the large service sector in which the ISO 9000 is applied to determine and maintain standards, the same or similar system (ISO 9000 or its equivalent) could be used effectively to determine and maintain standards in educational settings.

The next section reviews the literature related to TQM in education sector.

## **2.6 Total Quality Management (TQM) in the Education Sector**

Total Quality Management (TQM) is a recent management approach to quality improvement in terms of schools and education. It is still being debated at various quarters whether or not TQM could be a successful management practice in schools and

educational institutions, and opinions are still divided as to how, and whether or not TQM could be applied to the school system or educational situations successfully (Bonstingl, 1992; Cuttance 1995a; Desjardins & Obara, 1993; Fields, 1993, 1994; Fraas & Newman, 1996; Paine, *et al.*, 1992).

Paine *et al.* (1992) are of the belief that TQM can be successfully applied to education because, according to them education is not a unique and isolated industry different from other industries. They opine that education can learn from best management practices such as TQM applied in other industries.

Total quality management can have a major input into school management and leadership as well, as we begin to appreciate that education is not an industry that is somehow unique, different and isolated from other industries. Education and schools can learn much from the best corporate management practices . . . (p. 7).

The application of TQM in the education sector is being experimented also in some isolated cases in the public school system of the NSW State, Australia. At the time of writing, this writer was aware of only one such attempt at Lisarow High School, Lisarow in New South Wales, Australia. A visit to this school was made by this researcher in late 1995 to have first-hand information about the implementation of the TQM methods. The then Principal of this school who is also the first co-author of *Total Quality in Education* (Paine, *et al.*, 1992), was interviewed and some working documents were examined by the present researcher. It was evident that, in this school the TQM principles were being applied, though only to the non-pedagogical aspects of school life, such as the general administration management issues. It was evident that the entire school community was actively involved in most activities of the school.

The members of the school community are formed into small groups known as the Quality Circles under a TQM design. These quality circles of about 6-15 members, are nick-named "Lisarow Loops" (LLs). The main purpose here is to involve the members of the "Loops" in a meaningful way to solve problems in communication, decision-making



processes and development of policy. As they set themselves a task, members of the 'Loop' are expected to stay in the Loop until the goal is achieved or some learning has occurred (Paine *et al.*, 1992; Hough & Paine, 1997). With the 'Lisarow Loops' program, Paine *et al.* (1992, pp. 10-13) demonstrate how each of Deming's 14 points can be adapted in a school situation. The program is an involvement of various people in an improvement process. The improvement process at this level does not directly point to the quality outcome of students' learning, which is the central issue in education.

For Fraas and Newman (1996), an educational program or performance that is evaluated from the point of view of the TQM is likely to be most beneficial to education. This is so, they argue, because under the philosophy of the TQM, the purpose of evaluation process is to provide feedback for the continual improvement of the process being evaluated. They, however, warned that the evaluation must be cognisant of two basic concepts about TQM philosophy namely: that the educational program or the work of the teacher has to be viewed as a system; that, since every system is impacted by numerous factors, any outcome variable of the system will experience variation. It, therefore, means that to apply the philosophy of TQM successfully in education, the educationist must be able to recognise these two concepts and understand how they can impact on the educational system.

Drawing on Deming's ideas about knowing the extended processes and optimising the system, Schenkat (1993) suggested that education sector can use any other (convenient) terms from another field to successfully deliver the message.

I believe that if we know what we're about educationally, it can be worthwhile to use the other camp's terminology. The application of illustrations, analogies, and metaphors to make the subject comprehensible is the heart of pedagogical content knowledge  
(p. 65).

Desjardins and Obara (1993) in their exchange of correspondence considered the possibilities of applying the TQM in Japanese schools with or without success. One of the

points used to argue in favour of successful implementation of TQM in Japanese schools was based on teamwork and group values. Desjardins doubts how TQM could be successful in a Japanese school situation that does not emphasise individualisation. Obara argues in favour of the implementation of the TQM that:

Japanese schools are known for producing uniform and norm-conforming adults. This *de-individualisation* process seems as if to implant the value of teamwork and of putting one's own value second to the group's. Having learned to be less individualistic, they are prone to accepting team effort and sacrificing personal values for the company's (p. 69).

Going by what has been relayed earlier in the definition of TQM, Obara makes a vital point here for a successful implementation of TQM not only in Japanese schools, but also in any other school situation. TQM requires total commitment of all team players to the team's achievement of the team's goal(s).

Cuttance (1995a) is among those who believe that the adoption of TQM as management strategy in education sector should be treated with caution. He acknowledges that some attempts are being made at what he describes as an "extension of Deming's 14 points into the arena of schooling" (p. 15). However, he argues that there are well-researched approaches for school improvements and development that are specifically education-based. Therefore, to introduce or adopt to a new approach such as the TQM, which is developed outside of education sector, there must be sufficient evidence to show that the latter is "more relevant than the educationally derived alternatives" (p. 16). Cuttance does not appear to be convinced that TQM so far, is "sufficiently focused on student learning which is the core business of schools" (p. 29). His opinion is that, for a management philosophy or management method to make sense in the education sector, it must be sufficiently focused on the quality outcomes of teaching and learning for students. For now, according to Cuttance, the philosophy and practice of TQM as a school quality management strategy is a long way from being properly and directly focused on teaching and learning issues.

Kohn (1993) does not think that the TQM principles should be applied in the school systems either. One of his many points for objection is that TQM is “a marketplace model...that does not belong to the classroom” (p. 58). As TQM was developed or derived from, and with the business industry’s background or rationale, Kohn maintains further that to apply such processes and concepts in the schools will mean to turn the classroom into a workplace “at the risk of intellectual development . . .” (P. 58). Kohn rejects any idea or system that tends to refer to students as *customers*, as if the schools were service and manufacturing industries, or refers to students as *workers*, as though they were destined to produce some goods. The only thing students should produce according to Kohn is “*meaning* through the intellectual exploration and development that should take place in the classroom” (p. 60).

The views and contributions by Bonstingl (1992) to the arguments about applying TQM in the education sector are best represented in the following quote:

Although the philosophy of Total Quality Management springs from the world of business, it transcends the narrow commercial imperatives of increased productivity and profitability. TQM, at its heart, is dedicated to bringing out the best qualities in ourselves, in others, and in the work we do together. It is, in many ways a natural fit with the hopes and aspirations of educational leaders in their work to improve schools and communities (p. 5).

The above statement appears to offer, not only a balanced view, but also the possibility that TQM principles can be applied in education just as in the business sector to achieve the desired goals. However, before deciding ‘for’ or ‘against’ the TQM in education, it is advisable to make some sense of the truth that “. . . conventional wisdoms don’t necessarily predict or recognise future trends simply because they were successful in earlier or existing social systems” (cf ‘Hough & Paine, 1997, p. 6). In the present study the researcher would choose to keep an open mind, knowing that systems, organisations or communities are not static. Rather, they change, evolve and improve. Educational system is not an exception to this condition. It is hoped that the present research will

contribute to further and better understanding of the role TQM principles may play if they are applied to the education sector.

In the next section of this review, the discussion is focused on the practices or approaches to quality assurance in the education sector.

## 2.7 The Notion of Quality Assurance in Education

The achievement and maintenance of quality outcomes in the services provided have always been the deep concern of the educational institution or schools the world over (Woodhouse, 1996; Cuttance, 1994a, 1995a, 1998). Indeed, it would not be wrong to say that quality assurance in education is as old as education itself, and certainly had its origins long before ISO 9000 series in business certification came into existence (Tan San Yee, 1993). The long standing and universally known tradition of 'school inspection and school auditing practices' (see Chapter One of this project) gives credence to this claim (Linke, 1995). It is, however, true that in recent decades there has been renewed and increasing interest and need to ensure that quality is maintained and improved in education just as it is in manufacturing and service sectors, (Cuttance, 1994a). Experts have maintained that the efforts or attempts to monitor and promote quality standards in the past had been rather short of objectivity, and tended to be *ad hoc* and informal (Tan San Yee, 1993; Cuttance, 1995b). In such circumstances, 'quality' tends to be treated like a function or a program, instead of a core theme for the managers.

In the sample definitions given earlier, some of the common elements inherent in these definitions included the fact that Quality Assurance is known and described as a *planned system, process or procedure*, and *with specific aim*. That *specific aim* is to put in place something that could guarantee the desired quality standard of products or services. The former *ad hoc* type of education inspection did not sufficiently take care of all these elements in the process, and the emerging Quality Assurance practice is aimed at putting it right. The procedures for implementing Quality Assurance in education would

generally involve various forms of reviews, inspections, accreditations and testing of the students, among other considerations. It is important here to be aware of the fact that there are different educational levels, and so different factors would influence the design of their quality assurance processes to suit the different purposes, roles and functions for which such institutions are established. One such factor might be the influence of the funding bodies or other stakeholders, such as the government, the church and the community where the educational institution is situated.

Another influential factor would be the values underpinning the establishment and functioning of the particular educational institution or system. The educational institutions referred to here include: primary and secondary education; post-Secondary education such as the Technical and Further Education (TAFE) -as is the case in Australia; and tertiary/university education. Mostly tertiary education is funded on contract agreement by government or non-government agencies. A quality assurance process in such institutions would be influenced by the terms of contract agreements existing between the funding bodies and the educational institutions concerned. Focus here is mostly on meeting the accreditation or registration requirements as well as accountability to satisfy the different interest groups (Tuijnman & Postlethwaite, 1994; Commonwealth of Australia, 1995, 1996; Linke, 1995; Massaro, 1995).

The influence of the community also plays some role. Primary and secondary schools are generally known to be community oriented. The quality assurance review systems in primary or secondary school levels would normally be focused on how well the schools meet the needs and expectations of the community at the present, and what needs to be done in the future in order to meet the emergent needs.

Quality assurance in all sectors of education has become quite popular in recent years in almost all parts of the world, though it is more pronounced in the Western countries (Massaro, 1995). Educational institutions are increasingly coming under pressure from various stakeholder groups to be accountable, to produce evidence of good and reliable

performance, to give security for the services they provide and conform to required standards. This tendency to demand for accountability and a guarantee of quality, has not only taken up a global character, but has motivated schools and educational systems to design and implement some sort of *quality assurance programs* as a way or means of guaranteeing the quality or standard of the education they provide to the community (Cuttance, 1994b).

In the course of this present study the review of literature led to an exploration of some of the known educational systems that have been implementing some quality assurance processes in other parts of the world. A number of such education systems and their approaches to the management philosophy and practice of quality assurance processes are briefly discussed and presented in the next section.

## 2.8 Examples of Quality Assurance Practices in some Education Systems

### *The US Example: The New York State System*

The 'School Quality Review Initiative' (as it is known) in New York State, the USA, applies similar approach to its Quality Assurance practice. The New York State combines review, audit, management and developmental elements in each 4-6 years planned cycle of the implementation of its 'School Quality Review Initiative (quality assurance process). The operational principles in this system include: to establish a culture of review; to support and strengthen schools; and to build the capacity to reinvent and to progress further. What is specific about the New York State Quality Process is that it initiates a *discourse* within the school about teaching and learning, and assists the *discourse* to continue through *reflective action*.

In most of the United States, higher education institutions and systems ensure that their courses and programs offer quality learning experiences. The role of the State governments is to empower the education consumer by the provision of information on

how to identify quality programming. State higher education co-ordinating and governing boards incorporate quality standards for distance learning into their program review and funding processes.

Accrediting agencies may build strong quality review policies into their guidelines and evaluation criteria. Regional organisations also facilitate the sharing of quality instructional programming. Established policies and practices provide helpful lessons to others that are developing appropriate policies.

As colleges and universities move to make programs available beyond their campuses, they are being influenced both by external and internal forces to rethink the role of technology and to develop policies that address issues such as instructional design, faculty-student interaction, and student support services. State governments can empower the education consumer by providing information on how to identify quality programming. Traditionally, however, the state role in quality assurance in higher education has been one of regulation and licensing (accreditation).

Almost every state has some procedure for review and licensure of out-of-state institutions that seek to offer courses in their state. The Oregon State System for Higher Education (OSSHE) includes criteria for evaluating distance learning programs in its current program review process. The OSSHE Distance Education Policy Framework, published in 1995, sets out specific criteria for maintaining the "integrity" of programs offered to distant sites.

Higher education institutions and systems can ensure that their courses and programs offer quality learning experiences. State governments can empower the education consumer by providing information on how to identify quality programming.

Reciprocal agreements among States, whereby a receiving State can rely on a home State's review to ensure quality, will become more feasible as more states adopt quality

standards. Such agreements would, in turn, benefit program providers by ensuring that they would no longer have to meet the disparate requirements of 50 states' regulations.

In this system, the primary interest of the State is protecting the education consumer. State governments can do this by requiring educational providers to publicly disclose their accreditation status, providing consumers with criteria for evaluating the quality of a program, and, where possible, acting as an ombudsman when the consumer's trust has been violated.

### *The UK Example: The UK School Quality Assurance*

In the UK systems, the Quality Assurance approach is focused much on the appraisal and evaluation of the teachers. This practice involves the annual evaluation of the teachers with the view to improvement and development of their professionalism. The UK system believes that a systemic 'Teacher Evaluation process' can assist in identifying and developing the ways individuals in a school community work not only individually, but also collectively towards a common vision and mission of the school (McNamara, 1998: Cuttance, 1998).

In England for example, this function is handled by the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED). OFSTED is a non-ministerial government department that inspects and reports on the quality of education provided by state schools as well as the educational standards achieved in them (Ouston, Earley & Fidler, 1996). Teams of independent inspectors inspect each school every four years. The team is led by a Registered Inspector and comprises professional members (such as subject specialists) and at least one member with no professional experience of teaching or of managing a school (Macpherson, 1996).

In Wales, inspections are carried out by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools for Wales (HMCI). Inspections take place every five years and are undertaken by private contractors or LEAs. In nearly all other respects they operate in a way similar to



OFSTED (Ouston *et al.*, 1996).

In Scotland, inspections are carried out by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools for Scotland (HMCI). There are two types of inspections; a general and more detailed inspection. A return visit will be made within the year to check progress on areas highlighted in the inspection report.

In Northern Ireland, inspections are carried out by the Education and Training Inspectorate. Each school is inspected every five years. In all cases the Reports from inspections are published and made available to the stakeholders such as the parents, the funding agents or governments and the teachers.

Quality Assurance Process in most education systems is directly linked to funding at the further and higher education levels and is, consequently, open to public scrutiny. In England, Wales and Scotland the Higher Education Funding Councils are responsible for assessing institutions in the areas of teaching and research (Macpherson, 1996). Assessment is carried out on a subject-by-subject basis. This is graded according to three levels: excellent, satisfactory and unsatisfactory. Institutions are required to assess themselves and award themselves a rating. Those institutions which award themselves an 'excellent' rating are automatically inspected.

However, through research information, the universities are assessed every four years according to a five point scale, where level *five* equals 'work of international excellence' and level *one* equals 'work failing to reach the level of national excellence'.

The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) is funded by subscriptions from individual universities and colleges of higher education to whom it provides the following services:

- 1) Quality assurance, including the regular auditing of the ways in which institutions discharge their responsibilities for standards and quality; and

## 2) Quality enhancement, including the dissemination of good practice

It works closely with the quality assessment committees of the three funding councils for England, Wales and Scotland, and with the Department of Education, Northern Ireland.

### *The Australian Examples: Department of Education Queensland*

Queensland state schools operate within the public education system which has the need to ensure appropriate planning and accountability to satisfy the local communities within which they operate. Consequently the 'Department of Education Queensland' has designed the "School Planning and Accountability Framework" as an integrated approach to planning and accountability that can apply to the full range of school sites for its Quality Assurance practices (Education Queensland, 1997).

This system uses an eclectic approach to Quality Assurance in its schools. The Department of Education Queensland integrates the review and audit function with the developmental function. The approach combines the elements or features of 'external facilitation' with annual 'self-review', 'personal appraisal', 'professional development' and 'shared decision-making' processes. It combines features of quality assurance and quality management, and it is subject to regular review of its effectiveness.

The 'quality assurance approach' of the Department of Education Queensland, tries to promote school community involvement in planning and executing major issues, and reports to the community every outcome results. It sees the parent and community groups as the 'key audience for reporting' (Education Queensland, 1997, p. 1). It is, therefore, no surprise that the two main documents that direct the implementation of the quality measures are:

- 1) the *Partners for Excellence Strategic Plan*; and
- 2) the *Schools Operations Statement*.

These two documents or directories are expected to be used by schools in this State to

develop their own planning and accountability document which they, then, use for school improvement and accountability purposes. The bottom line is that, like in other systems, the overall aims are *development* (improvement) and *accountability*.

### *The TAFE Commission*

As the name implies, Technical and Further Education (TAFE), offers information on technical and further education. Its quality assurance program would naturally be focused on certifying that the procedures put in place can provide important information to customers, in the first place. There are apparent differences existing in quality assurance approaches in different systems. These are not only reflections of the differences in market context, they are also due to the differences in the nature of institutions or establishments (Cuttance 1994b, 1995a). Thus, the quality assurance systems are developed to respond to the needs of those that benefit, or are expected to benefit from the products or services offered by the institutions or establishments. The NSW TAFE quality approach builds on this type of understanding. The NSW TAFE Commission's approach to quality assurance is a process based on internal improvement strategy, and the involvement of all grades of staff to achieve desired outcome.

### *The NSW Department of Education and Training (DET)*

Until early in 1999, the NSW Department of Education and Training (DET) was known as the Department of School Education (DSE). The change in terminology was only an internal rationalisation. Little or nothing has changed with regards to the roles of the department. The DET incorporates a Quality Assurance Review Directorate which is charged with the function to ensure that quality is achieved and maintained in the NSW schools system. In this system, the approach to Quality Assurance practice was through *an external quality review panel*, which worked independently of the school's operations. The function of the Directorate was to ensure accountability and strengthen the quality of education in individual schools as well as in the whole system. So, the Quality Assurance

Review Teams (as they were called) were concerned with 'review' and 'audit' functions and not management.

By the time the review reports have been handed in to the school community, the Review Team's functions were considered ended. This means that the function of the Teams did not include assistance to the schools and monitoring the implementation of whatever recommendations were contained in the reports. This approach constituted a fundamental weakness in the NSW Quality Assurance practice.

Moreover, bureaucratic pressures between the government and teachers' union, and other inconsistencies caused much disquiet among teachers (Cuttance, 1998). Little wonder that the program (or the approach) was abandoned in 1996 with a promise by the then Education Minister to replace it with a new program (Raethel, 1996).

In 1997, the NSW DSE renamed its Quality Assurance system as "School Accountability and Improvement Process" (NSW DSE, 1997). Under this new name or terminology, the practice has been broken into three main headings or components: School Self-Evaluation; Annual School Reports; and School Reviews.

The School Self-Evaluation approach focuses on "improving schools, emphasises the importance of student learning and achievement, and involves the school community, including teachers and parents" (NSW DSE, 1997, p. 2). In this approach, external evaluators go into the individual schools to assess and evaluate the facilities, the public examination record results, the curriculum and other such issues that are aimed to enhance the effective performance and quality teaching and learning in the schools concerned.

The Annual School Reports that follow provide opportunity for accountability to the various stakeholder groups. The School Reviews on the other hand, are aimed to "assist schools benefit from an in-depth analysis, identify the actions needed to produce

improvement, and identify how school and system resources should be used in following up the review” (p. 6).

These restructured processes were still being developed at the time of this writing in 1999, and “were due to come into operation” (interview and discussion with a senior officer at the head office of the DET). It was also disclosed that major features or characteristics of the ‘new’ package will include the involvement of the schools themselves in reviewing their progress and nominating areas where they need support; and the provision of leadership assistance from the main system. The school communities were expected to take the initiative and be committed to self-review and improvement. It is expected that the DET will offer any assistance to the schools in form of personnel, finances or technical advice, to enhance the implementation of the Quality Assurance Processes.

#### *The Sydney Catholic Education Office (CEO) Approach.*

The approach to Quality Assurance by the Catholic Education Office Sydney has some similarity with that of DET described above. However, the CEO has a rather more embracing and comprehensive design and approach which fits its purposes according to its peculiar situation and the extent of commitment to, and by the various stakeholder groups.

In its approach to Quality Assurance processes and practice, the CEO, Sydney combines the elements of the School Review and Development (SRD), the Educational Audit, the Personnel Performance Planning and Review (PPPR), and the Contract Renewal, in a planned 4-6 year cycle of management and development. The central theme of the Processes is about accountability and development.

The operational principles include among others:

- to assist the Catholic systemic schools and personnel maintain a focus on their

mission in the context of the Catholic Church;

- to assist the schools and personnel reflect on their teaching and learning environment;
- to review aspects of school functioning; and
- to develop a strategic management plan for the implementation of the various processes.

Since the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO is the main topic of this study, more details on this approach is presented in a subsequent and appropriate section (see # 2.9).

It must be pointed out that, this exploration and presentation of some of the known quality assurance practices are not for the purposes of comparisons, and, they do not follow any specific order. They are mainly to support the fact, this management philosophy and practice is gaining global acceptance and application.

#### **An Overview of this section**

Tables 2.1.1, 2.1.2 and 2.1.3 provide a synoptic view of some of these known educational systems with their Quality Assurance practices. It shows in a summary, the nature of the quality assurance processes, the operational principles or focus areas for each system, the varied components of the processes and some of the specific features that characterise each system's process.

Table 2.1.1: Some Known Educational Systems and their Approaches to Quality Assurance Practices

EDUCATION SYSTEMS	NATURE OF PROCESS	OPERATIONAL FOCUS	COMPONENTS OF THE PROCESS	SPECIFIC FEATURES
<b>THE US: New York State</b>	School Quality Review Teams * Broad bases membership both internal and external to local school community. * Teams complement the school level process of self-Review.	* Establish a culture of review. * Support and strengthen schools. * Build the capacity to reinvent and progress	* School Quality Review Initiative * Annual Program of Self-Review (4yrs.). * External School Quality Review every 5 years.	* Key strategy is to initiate a discourse within the school about teaching and learning and to assist the discourse to continue through Reflective Action.
<b>THE UK SYSTEM</b>	* OFSTED Led: Non-ministerial Government Department. Inspection by registered and professional inspectors. * OHMCI: Private contract or by the LEA.	* Focuses on Teacher appraisal and system evaluation. * Assisting the institutions to assess themselves	* There is a general inspection every five years. * There is a returned and more detailed inspection between the years to check progress areas.	Individual persons and institutions identify, develop and work for and towards the common Mission
<b>Australia: Queensland Department of Education</b>	* Process of Collaborative School Development Planning and Review. * School Review Team comprises school community representatives, department representative and others.	* Participative planning and decision-making. * Empowerment of all groups. * Equitable response to school community needs and system priorities.	* Annual School Development * Annual Operational Plan * Internal School Review * Collaborative School Review every 3 years.	* Combines features of quality assurance and quality management. * It is subject to regular review of its effectiveness.
<b>Australia, NSW: TAFE Commission</b>	A process based on an internal improvement strategy	* Commitment to develop and maintain quality assurance systems continuously across all areas. * Focus is continuous improvement to meet customer needs	* Quality Strategy tool based on eg. Crosby's Quality Management Grid. * Work Teams and Cross-functional Teams are responsible for their own quality improvement.	* Quality Strategy is a tool for all staff to use, regardless of position.

Table 2.1.2: Some Known Educational Systems and their Approaches to Quality Assurance Practices

EDUCATION SYSTEMS	NATURE OF PROCESS	OPERATIONAL FOCUS	COMPONENTS OF THE PROCESSES	SPECIFIC FEATURES
<b>Australia, NSW: Quality Assurance Directorate in the Department of Education and Training (DET).</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Quality Assurance Directorate was independent of the operational functions of the schools</li> <li>* Quality Assurance Review Teams comprised largely school-based personnel.</li> <li>* To fulfil a Quality Assurance function rather than a Quality Management function.</li> <li>* School Self-Evaluation and Improvement</li> <li>* External evaluating Team chosen from and by the DSE.</li> <li>* Self reviewing process by the schools' own initiatives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Strengthened the accountability for the quality of education in individual schools and the system as a whole.</li> <li>* To contribute to standards and improvement of student learning outcomes.</li> <li>* Could develop ownership feeling and involves community participation.</li> <li>* Could give a focus to key areas for further development</li> <li>* Focus on public accountability and Self-improvement.</li> <li>* Inform and involve all stakeholders by publishing reports</li> <li>* Schools to nominate areas that need supports and assistance.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Quality Review was to function with focus on effectiveness of school in achieving high quality student learning outcomes in KLAS.</li> <li>* Quality Audit function was meant to cover key components of school quality systems e.g. policy statements, assessment and reporting procedures, etc.</li> <li>* Annual Quality Audit functions.</li> <li>* Annual school self-evaluation</li> <li>* Annual school reporting</li> <li>* Self Reviewing functions and improvement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Could assist schools to determine their future development but did not assist with the management of that development.</li> <li>* It could be seen as a set of Best Practice Outcome Statements to give direction to the focus areas for each review, as well as provide the basis for auditing and reviewing the effectiveness of quality systems of schools.</li> <li>* Subject to regular evaluation and reviewing processes</li> <li>* Would probably concentrate on nominated areas for improvement.</li> <li>systematic evaluation and public reporting</li> </ul>



Table 2.1.3: Some Known Educational Systems and their Approach to Quality Assurance Practices

EDUCATION SYSTEMS	NATURE OF PROCESS	OPERATIONAL FOCUS	COMPONENTS OF THE PROCESSES	SPECIFIC FEATURES
NSW: Catholic Education Office (CEO), Sydney	<p>Process of Review and Development is negotiated and planned for by Principals and Regional Consultants based on the guidelines provided by the CEO.</p> <p>* Schools identify current staff, researches and external facilitation required for the running of the processes .</p>	<p>School Review and Development helps schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to focus on their mission in wider church context of evangelisation;</li> <li>-to reflect on their teaching and learning environment;</li> <li>- to review aspects of school functioning;</li> <li>- to develop and implement a Development Plan.</li> </ul>	<p>Strategic Management Cycle for each school based on 4-year plan.</p> <p>* School Review, Ed. audit and the Strategic Management Priorities</p>	<p>Educational Audit as an event at a fixed point in time. Conducted by Educational Audit Team of CEO personnel.</p> <p>Strategic Management Cycle incorporates 4 phases on annual bases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Annual Development Plan.</li> <li>* Annual Active Role Descriptions.</li> <li>* Implementation of Development Plan.</li> <li>* Personnel Performance Planning and Review (PPPR)</li> </ul>

There are as varied ways of defining or describing the practices or the processes and their outcomes as there are varied educational settings or systems. However, whatever the definition, whatever the description, they all demonstrate the fact that the notion or practice of *Quality Assurance* in educational settings is aimed at encouraging the development of a *culture of self-review* and *continuous improvement* in the framework of accountability and development in such educational systems.

Quality Assurance practices in education are characterised by a range of processes aimed at building a culture of self-review as well as the culture of accountability. Some systems use the external review and audit process, as in the case of the NSW Department of Education and Training (DET). Others, such as the CEO Sydney, prefer the combination of the external and internal reviews and development processes.

While the approach may differ slightly in the individual systems, it is clear that they all emerge from a common imperative, ie to ensure and or assure the quality of the educational services that are provided by the different systems. In this case it is not reasonable to commend or describe any one approach as either more or less desirable than the other, since each system develops a rationale for the Quality Assurance practice in accordance with its vision and version of what is 'fitness for their purpose'. For instance the incorporation of the distinctive processes such as the *Personnel Performance Planning and Review*, and the *Contract Renewal* approach into the Quality Assurance Processes by the CEO, is designed to fit the purpose of the Catholic education system.

From the foregoing, it can be concluded that the main concern for most education systems in undertaking a quality assurance practice, is to develop a built-in culture of regular review and reflection as a means of enhancing the continuous development and improved quality outcomes in education.

Since this present study is being carried out with particular reference to the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney, it was deemed necessary to give a special attention to the procedures for their implementation. The next section therefore, reviews the literature in relation to the actual implementation procedures for these Processes.

## 2.9 The Implementation of Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney

The CEO Sydney has been publishing and updating manuals, handbooks and circular letters that inform and guide the system and the schools on the implementation of these emerging Quality Assurance Processes (Linking the Processes Part 1, 1992: Circular Letter ED/138; Linking the Processes Part 2, 1993: Circular Letter ED/174; Ensuring Quality, 1996; Manual for SRD, Primary & Secondary, 1994, 1999; PPPR Guidelines, 1996; CR/RC: Archdiocesan Guidelines, 1996; Guide to Educational Services, 1999).

As stated earlier in Chapter One, the historical facts show that the implementation of the Processes did not have a very formal beginning. It was developed from an appraisal process that had been in place for about 15 years, but its application was limited to school Principals and others in management positions in the CEO. The process had been designed and operated in the manner of the traditional inspection format. The task force set up in 1989 was commissioned to seek more effective ways in which the process could link development of school and personnel with accountability.

After the CEO had had a review of its functions and undertaken intensive consultation in 1992 and 1993, the present form of processes emerged with the following components:

*Personnel Performance Planning and Review (PPPR),*

*School Review and Development (SRD) including Educational Audit, and*

*Contract Renewal/Review Consultation for Principals and School Executives.*

The Personnel Performance Planning and Review has a twofold-aim. First, is to enhance the skills and effectiveness of the Principals, executive staff and teachers holding positions of special responsibility in school, either as individual leaders or as leadership teams. Second, its aim is to provide a forum for constructive feedback about performance and achievement. There are two aspects of this process: the development aspect (enhance skill and effectiveness), and the accountability aspect (feedback about performance).

By way of definition, PPPR may be described as “an appraisal process enabling those holding promotion positions in Catholic schools to develop themselves professionally through an annual process of goal-setting and reflection on performance in a collegial context. . . .” (CEO, 1996, p. 3)

### *The Personnel Planning Performance and Review (PPPR).*

When the staff have some specific role descriptions relevant to the school’s relevant needs and direction, the PPPR can be greatly facilitated. Generally there are four steps to follow:

#### Step 1: The Planning Interviews

At this point the leader (or the mentor) and colleague discuss the role and identify priorities for the coming year. They negotiate the PPPR goals for the year and set a realistic Action Plan to achieve the goals.

#### Step 2: The Implementation

The colleague begins implementing the Action Plan. The leader or mentor and colleague should check in regularly with each other regarding progress and/or problems.

#### Step 3: The Mid-year Interviews

This formal check-in interview enables both the leader and colleague to monitor progress towards achieving goals and to reassess the Action Plan if necessary in the light of other impacting issues.

#### Step 4: The Final (Appraisal) Interviews

In this interview achievements are acknowledged and affirmation is given. Any areas needing further development are recorded and will be discussed as possible goals in the Planning Interview for the following year. This final step would normally include the offering and receiving of feedback to and from the colleague. In a process such as this,

evaluation and feedback are among the major ingredients or outcomes, which help both, to affirm the participants and confirm the process itself.

Vallence and Wallace (1993) have argued in favour of affirmation when they cited Stewart (1991) in their recent work:

If, over a period of time, a person is told that they are to be responsible for this, that and the other . . . they never get any feedback, then what sense does it make. . . ? You might do it well twelve times but if nobody tells you, or even worse, if your boss doesn't know whether it is done well or not, then what is the value in the work you do? (p. 7).

This view gives much support not only to the PPPR process, but also to the entire Quality Assurance Processes with their major ingredients as feedback, affirmation of colleagues and self, celebration of achievement and planning for the future.

The PPPR process was designated and applied originally as an appraisal process for the senior officers in the CEO employment. Later, it was extended to Principals, Assistant Principals and Religious Education Coordinators at the school levels. In 1997, a pilot program for teachers PPPR was carried out following the discussion and agreement reached between the Catholic Education Office, Sydney and the NSW Independent Education Union (IEU) on the implementation of Teacher Personnel Performance Planning and Review. This pilot program is said to have failed apparently due to "poor timing and insufficient preparation" (information from the CEO senior staff).

### *School Review and Development (SRD).*

The School Review and Development is one of the network of system processes designed to assist school communities to enhance effective leadership and the quality of teaching and learning for those schools that are under the control of the CEO, Sydney (CEO, 1994). Each systemic Catholic school community, in partnership with the Catholic

Education Office, undertakes processes comprising the SRD program in order to:

1. Clarify core purposes, values and mission;
2. Review all aspects of school functioning;
3. Develop, publish and implement long and short term plans  
for maintenance and improvement in learning and teaching;
4. Provide for accountability to the School Community, Church, Catholic  
Education Office and the State Government; and
5. Be effective, harmonious and identifiably Catholic places of learning where  
the expectations, needs and aspirations of all involved in the education of  
young Australian people are capable of being realised (CEO, 1995, p. 2).

From the above it is evident that SRD has developed a very broad agenda which is constantly enriched by input from school communities. While SRD is a system-sponsored and system-supported set of processes, its activities are dependent on the particular individual school communities and are managed at that level. It is the “school’s own agenda, . . . led by the Principal, . . . supported by an SRD Management Group, Regional Consultant and facilitator external to the school” (CEO, 1994, p. 7).

SRD is therefore, said to focus on:

- each school community celebrating its story, successes and achievements;
- the educative and evangelising mission of each school in its local context; and
- assisting each school to identify and act on key issues of educational importance  
(School Review & Development, CEO, 1994, p. 3).

There are five key steps or procedures to be followed in the School Review and Development (SRD). Each school is expected to negotiate the completion time with the Regional Consultant concerned. The five key steps are:

1. Planning for the SRD and Program Initiation;
2. Clarifying Mission;

3. The Review and resultant Development Plan;
4. The Educational Audit;
5. Implementation of the Development Plan.

At the “planning and initiation stage”, the Principal and Regional Consultant assess the readiness of the school community for SRD and negotiate timing, sequence, resources and processes necessary to support the school’s SRD program.

At the “clarifying mission stage”, the school community reflectively examines its vision and values in the context of the vision of the Catholic Education in the Archdiocese of Sydney.

At the “Review and Development Plan”, SRD enhances the capacity of the school to adapt and engage in planned, meaningful change as it consults with its community and tries to identify needs, expectations and perceptions. The SRD management group gathers data and reviews all aspect of the school’s functioning. Important needs and major concerns for the schools are identified and are addressed through the plan and implementation of the process over a period of time.

### *The Educational Audit Process*

The Educational Audit can be conducted concurrently with the School Review. In that case the Audit would provide the data source for the Review exercise. Educational Audit is that process which overviews, analyses and reports on the quality and effectiveness of the schools in the Archdiocese of Sydney under the quality assurance processes. The CEO is responsible to the Minister of Education through the Board of Studies for monitoring school’s compliance with the Education Reform Act (1990). One of the purposes for conducting the Educational Audit process is to help validate the school’s educational program, specifically with regards to the Registration and Accreditation of the Catholic systemic schools. The Educational Audit is also an opportunity for the CEO

to validate the schools' educational program and remain accountable to the Church community. In this way the CEO make certain that the Catholic values are integrated across all Key Learning Areas (KLA), and that the SACS Board's Vision and Mission Statements are given priority.

The Educational Audit is conducted in accordance with the guidelines or requirements obtained from the Board of Studies Manual for the Registration and Accreditation of Non-Government Schools (1993). The CEO prepares the Educational Audit Workbook for the systemic schools in the form that offers the "pro-formats for assembling Registration and Accreditation data, as well as that pertaining to accountability to the Catholic community as prescribed by the Board of Studies" (CEO, 1994, p, 10).

#### *Contract Renewal/Review Consultation*

The implementation of this aspect of the Processes is in connection with the appointment of Principals in the systemic schools. Lay Principals, appointed initially on a two-year contract, and then on a four-year contract, undertake the Contract Renewal process in the final year of each contractual period. For the Religious Principals, this process is known as 'Review Consultation'. The purpose of this process is to gather information on a Principal's leadership effectiveness over the whole contract period in order to be able to make a decision regarding a new contract. Through the guidelines of this process, the Principal also generates a development plan for aspects of leadership, education and management that are to be addressed during the life of the new contract. It is in these ways that the Contract Renewal/Review Consultation Process contributes to the continual improvement of teaching and learning, enhances quality outcomes as the ultimate goal for the implementation of the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO Sydney.



## 2.10 Summary

The review of literature in this chapter has incorporated extensive definitions and descriptions of the terms such as: quality, quality assurance and total quality management as they are being applied in management practices in both the business and education sectors. In this way, the review has helped to place the present study in context with current knowledge and practices in its chosen area. The review has greatly enhanced understanding and clarified any ambiguities concerning the purpose and scope of the present study.

From the review of literature, it can be seen that much has been written and discussed in the last decades about *quality* and *quality assurance* as an emerging management philosophy and practice. Originally a preserve of the business and manufacturing industries, this practice is now making great inroads into present-day schools and educational institutions.

One of the definitions of *quality* describes it as “fitness for the purpose” (Harvey & Green, 1993, p. 16). In this case, the ‘purpose’ depends on, and is determined by the various people or organisations expected to use a particular product or service. *Quality assurance* on the other hand, refers to “all the planned and systemic actions necessary to provide or produce that (quality) which ‘fits the purpose’ or meets the need of the customer”(Cuttance, 1995a, p.12).

In both the business and education sectors, the implementation of quality assurance processes is being driven by the need to enhance accountability, development and quality outcomes in the organisations. As McKay and Kember (1999, p. 25) point out, “the quality assurance measures are crucial in providing the window of opportunity for subsequent development” of both the system and the personnel of the system.

It is through the implementation of the quality measures that the manufacturing and

service industries best meet the expectations of their stakeholder groups. In the same way, the Catholic Education system can best meet the expectations of the government, the church, the individuals and the different communities to whom it is accountable.

The exploration of other education settings and systems has revealed and confirmed that this management practice is gaining acceptance worldwide. This implies that, the CEO, Sydney is involved in a management practice that is credible and consistent with internationally accepted practices (McNamara, 1998; Cuttance, 1998).

While a number of reviews and annual reports (CEO, 1993, 1996; Clark, 1998) are available and indicate positive outcomes resulting from the implementation of the processes, more research in this area is still needed. Opportunities for more research will not only address concerns regarding the effectiveness of the implementation of the processes, but also will contribute to knowledge in this area. For instance, more research will be necessary to understand the perceptions of the various stakeholder groups about the nature, outcomes and effectiveness of the Processes in order to effectively evaluate their outcomes. For this and other reasons, the researcher believes that the present study is both timely and relevant, and has the potential to make significant contribution to knowledge in this area.

In the next chapter, the Design and Methodology adopted for this study are explained and justified.

## CHAPTER THREE

### THE RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Introduction

It is fundamental to any research project that an effective methodology be adopted and a well-articulated design be developed to enable the researcher to answer research questions validly, objectively, accurately and as economically as possible. When the designs and methodology are adequately planned and executed, the researchers or investigators can place greater confidence in their observations and inferences resulting therefrom.

In this Chapter the Designs and Methodologies selected for the study of the Nature, Outcomes and Effectiveness of the Implementation of the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney are discussed. The discussions are in two main parts. In Part One, a description and definition of qualitative research design are presented, while in Part Two the various techniques and procedures involved in the Methodology adopted for this research project are described and explained.

## THE RESEARCH DESIGN

### 3.2 Defining the Research Design

LeCompte and Preissle (1993) had remarked that “the term *research design* (in qualitative research) is somewhat confusing”, adding that “social science methodologists have failed to make . . . distinctions among designs and data collection methods” (p. 30). This situation, these authors maintain, results in apparent confusion in the use of the term ‘research design’. They advise that “designations of items that apply to different aspects of the inquiry process (such as, observational, naturalistic, or qualitative), and designations that refer to design (that is the logical sequence of the research), should not be confused” (p. 30).

With such observations coming from renowned researchers and writers such as LeCompte and Preissle, it can be seen that a straightforward definition of ‘research design’ in qualitative research is not an easy goal to achieve, especially given the fact that the term may refer to different things in different circumstances. In ordinary thinking, a design may be a simple and understandable idea, but in research or social science investigation, the idea of a design becomes a complex and difficult issue.

In general, a ‘research design’ involves the making of decisions about the particular purpose of a project and the type of evidence required to effectively answer the research questions. Such decisions include the researcher determining what direction the research should follow, what type of questions can supply the type of responses and data desired for the particular study (Burns, 1990; LeCompte & Preissle 1993; Walker, 1985; Yin 1994). A research design, therefore, where it can be determined, enables the researcher to map out the strategies or measures to be applied in the study in order to obtain required results.

LeCompte and Preissle (1993) summarise the idea of research design in the following statement:

Research design involves putting things together, bringing to consciousness, - and to the notebook- as many aspects as possible of the research's planning and preparation for inquiry (p. 55).

This description or definition clarifies the functions as well as the purposes of a design in research projects. It also points to the functions of the qualitative researcher who makes use of a design in his or her study.

A number of other authors have also tried to clear up any confusions about the meaning of a research design by defining and explaining this issue. Yin (1994) for instance, defines a research design as:

the logical sequence that connects the empirical data to a study's initial research questions and, ultimately, to its conclusions. Colloquially, it is an action plan for getting from *here* to *there*, where *here* may be defined as the initial set of questions to be answered, and *there* is some set of conclusions (answers) about these questions (p. 19).

Yin goes on to support his view by citing the work of Nachmias and Nachmias (1992) who have defined or described a research design as:

a plan that guides the investigator in the process of collecting, analysing and interpreting observations. It is a logical model of proof that allows the researcher to draw inferences concerning causal relations among the variables under investigation. The research design also defines the domain of generalizability, i.e. whether the obtained interpretations can be generalised to a larger population or to different situations  
(cited in Yin, 1994, p. 20).

Further, Yin pictures a research design as a "blueprint" of the research project which deals with four main issues or problems, namely: what question to study; what data are relevant; what data to collect; and how to analyse the results (p. 20).

Kerlinger (1979) had earlier defined a research design as "the plan, strategy and structure of investigation conceived so as to obtain answers to research questions" (p. 83). Further, he describes research design as "data discipline" (p.93), which aims to impose controlled restrictions or control the sources of influence on research data.

In their own contributions to better understanding of the item, Maykut and Morehouse (1994) describe research design as the measure which “includes the overall approach to be taken (in a study) and the detailed information about how the study will be carried out, with whom and where ” (p. 64).

Consequently, ‘that way of putting things together’ (the design), ‘that conceived way of obtaining answers to research questions’ (structured interview), and the ‘logical sequence of analysing and interpreting the research data’ (meaning condensation) were adopted as the research design for this project.

This design requires the researcher to go out to meet the different respondents face-to-face, and interview them. The interview, therefore, takes place in lived-world of the respondents’. It is in this regard that a qualitative research designed with interview as a data collection method, can be described as a form of field study exercise.

In the next section, consideration is given to issues of bias effect in a research design.

### **3.3 Bias Effects in Research Design**

Every research work involves some measurements in one form or the other, and the measurements are always accomplished with some devices or procedures technically described as ‘instruments’. In a research interview project, these instruments may include among others: the questions designed for the interview and the person(s) conducting the interview.

Spector (1981) pointed out that all instruments employed in a study or research have some degree of error associated with them. Such (inherent) error would be the bias in the design of the instrument itself. He stated that “bias often occurs due to distortions in procedures and due to the characteristics of instruments, observers, and investigators” (p. 13). In an interview session, for example, bias could set in due to the characteristic behaviour of those involved, such as the eagerness of the respondent to

please the interviewer on the one hand, or, on the other hand, it could be due to the interviewer's tendency to seek answers that would support his or her preconceived notions.

While drawing up the design for the present project, the researcher was cognisant of the various bias effects that could be present in the design itself, the research instrument (such as the interview schedules), the interviewer, or the respondents. It is also possible the equipment such as the means of recording the interview responses—in this case, audio-tape recording, can be a source of bias (Minichiello *et al.*, 1995; Mishler, 1986; Thompson, 1996). Appropriate steps were taken at the appropriate stages in this research to minimise any bias effects either in the design or the instruments of the study.

For example, it was possible that the respondents could be pre-occupied with the protection of their privacy, confidentiality and what could be the resultant effect of the study on their job security. This could be a cause of bias in their free participation in the study. This situation or atmosphere of fear was minimised or relaxed by the use of Informed/Consent Letter by means of which the respondents are invited to participate, and also guaranteed the protection of their privacy while they participate in the research project.

### **3.4 Validity and Reliability Issues**

Validity and Reliability of data are important items that must be attended to in any research project. Validity is generally defined as “the degree to which a test measures what it purports to measure” – and for the purposes to which the prospective test user wishes to put it (Borg & Gall, 1989, p. 249). There are three types of validity namely: construct validity, internal validity and external validity. Construct validity is concerned with the establishment of appropriate operational measures for a study being undertaken. Internal validity is concerned with the measures adopted by the researcher or investigator to see whether they really measure what they say they do. External validity, on the other hand, is concerned with the application of the particular to the general (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993; Steane, 1995).

Cohen and Manion (1996) make clearer distinction between internal and external validity as they prefer the definition offered by Campbell and Stanley (1963) for internal and external validity.

Internal validity is concerned with the question, do the experimental treatments, in fact, make a difference in the specific experiment under scrutiny?

External validity, on the other hand, asks the question, given these demonstrable effects, to what populations or settings can they be generalised? (Cohen & Manion, 1996, p. 170).

The interest of a researcher, however, is to enhance the accuracy of the meaning of the data of the study, as much as possible, by taking appropriate measures or actions.

In this present study the following appropriate measures were incorporated in the design to enhance or ensure validity: a verbatim transcription of the recorded interviews was carried out; the drafts were sent to individual respondents to read through, make necessary corrections or additions, and then sign an Approval Form to indicate that the data could be used for the purposes of the research only. In this way, it was hoped to enhance the validity of the transcripts as well as ascertain the validity of the answers to the interview questions.

Reliability refers to the extent to which the findings of the study can be replicated. The notion of reliability is an assumption that a single phenomenon that is studied the same way or replicated by different people, should produce the same result. Reliability has something in common with internal validity described above in that both of them are concerned with how consistent and dependable are the data obtained from the study of a specific subject. Merriam (1988, p. 172) suggests that reliability in research may be enhanced through triangulation of research methods. Another way is to enlist the assistance and services of two or more co-researchers in which case, the different independent results or findings could be compared for reliability checks.

In the next section, the research methodology which includes all the techniques and procedures employed in this study project for data collection and data analysis, are discussed and explained.



## THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 3.5 Defining Research Methodology

Methodology in a research project refers to the explanation or justification of the various techniques and procedures employed in the process of data-gathering for the particular research. Methodology is, therefore, the study or the science of the way to get to the goal (Cohen & Manion, 1994; Kvale, 1996; Robinson, 1993), and not the goal itself.

Robinson (1993) draws upon the work of Kaplan (1964), and describes methodology as “a meta-level investigation of the limitations, resources and presuppositions of method, aimed at understanding the process of inquiry rather than the products themselves” (p. 13). Robinson further cites Kaplan’s definition or description to explain what methodology in research refers to:

By methodology I mean “the study--the description, the explanation  
and the justification--of methods, and not the methods themselves”  
(cited in Robinson, 1993, p. 13)

This idea or aim is in congruence with that expressed by Cohen and Manion (1994) when they pointed out that “the aim of methodology is to help us to understand . . . not the products of scientific inquiry but the process itself” (p. 39). Cohen and Manion had arrived at this point or conclusion by drawing upon yet another work of Kaplan (1973) which explains the aims and purposes of research methodology as quoted here:

The aim of methodology is to describe and analyse these methods, throwing light on their limitations and resources, clarifying their presuppositions and consequences, relating their potentialities to the twilight zone at the frontiers of knowledge. It is to venture generalisations from the success of particular techniques, suggesting new applications, and to unfold the specific bearings of logical and metaphysical principles on concrete problems, suggesting new

formulations (cited in Cohen & Manion, 1994, p.39)

The aim or purpose of this section on methodology was to describe and justify the various techniques and procedures that were employed during the process of the data-gathering and throughout the entire study. By so doing, it was possible to clarify their *presuppositions* and enhance the appreciation of any form of limitations that may be inherent in those techniques or procedures.

The choice of a suitable method for data collection in a particular research project is mostly influenced by, both the nature of a project and the type of research questions. The research problem or question for this present study was presented earlier in Chapter One, but it is repeated here for the benefit of the reader:

1. What are the perceptions of some significant stakeholders in the Catholic Education System about the *Nature, Outcomes* and *Effectiveness* of the implementation of the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney?
2. What factors are assisting and/or hindering the effective implementation of these processes both in the CEO and in the school levels?

Owing to the nature and design of the present project, the data collection was achieved through survey and interaction of the researcher with the various participants. It was the view of the researcher that qualitative methodology is suitable for this type of study. The method involves interviewing participants to obtain their views and understand their perceptions about a specific project or program--the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO Sydney. The ensuing discussions, therefore, are concerned with the description of the various methods and techniques this study employed to obtain the desired data. The discussions here begin with the explanation of the locations or sites for the study (interviews).

### **3.6 Site or Location for the Study**

Among the many considerations for any researcher while designing the study project includes: the how and where to locate the interviews. Since the research project is about the quality assurance processes of the Catholic Education Office (CEO), Sydney, it was natural and reasonable to select the Central and Regional Catholic

Education Offices in Sydney, and the selected Catholic schools as suitable sites at which to carry out the study project. Moreover, since this research involved interviewing participants, and interviews are believed to be a process of digging into the lived-world and life experience of the interviewees (Kvale, 1996), it was decided that those who would be selected as participants should attend the interviews at their usual places of work where (their lived-world) they acquire such life experiences. This researcher recognised too, that, such an atmosphere would enhance relaxation and a feeling of being at home by the participants to talk freely about their experiences.

Access to the nominated locations or sites for the interviews had to be guaranteed officially. To this end, a formal application was made to the proper authority of the Catholic Education system in Sydney. Clearance and permission from the Catholic Education Office Sydney was readily obtained. A duplicate copy of the letter is provided as **Appendix D**. The issue about clearance or permission was considered crucial as the failure to gain access to the research site could prevent the study from starting at all. An unauthorised entry to the site(s) would be ethically wrong and could well invalidate the entire research project. This point is elaborated upon further in the section on ethics clearance in research.

### **3.7 Interviews as Data Collection Tools**

Many studies have applied interview as a method for gathering information, and have described or defined interview in various ways. It can be used to measure knowledge or information, to test people's likes and dislikes, to test for values and preferences and to examine people's attitudes and beliefs. As a research tool, the interview also has a purpose of providing the researcher access to the interviewee's ideas and points of view. It was for such reason that Patton (1990) pointed out that:

the purpose of interviewing is to understand how staff and participants view a program, to learn their terminology, their judgement and to capture the complexities of their individual perceptions and experiences (p. 290).

Among the most comprehensive definitions of interview is one that was offered in the

work of Cohen and Manion (1994) who cite from Cannel and Kahn's (1968) definition that interview is:

a two-person conversation initiated by the interviewer for the purposes of obtaining research-relevant information, and focused by him on content specified by research objectives of systemic description, prediction, or explanation (p. 271).

The work of Kvale (1996) titled "Interviews", was found to be a useful reference point in regards to understanding and using 'interviews' as means of data collection. Using the metaphors of 'miner' and 'traveller', Kvale paints the picture of the interviewer as one who is always out there in the field searching for what is valuable for his or her study.

As a miner, Kvale explains that,

the interviewer is in search of knowledge buried or waiting in the subjects' interior as a metal. This knowledge when found, is unearthed. . . . "The precious facts and meanings are purified by transcribing them from the oral to the written mode. . . . Then they are analysed, the objective facts and the essential meanings are drawn out by various techniques and moulded into their definitive form (p. 4).

As a traveller, the interviewer (researcher) is "on a journey that leads to a tale to be told upon returning home. . . . The travelling reporter hears and sees what is later described qualitatively, and reconstructed as stories to be told to people in his/her country or even those who travelled or wandered with him/her . . ." (p. 5). It was considered that to go out to the field would offer the researcher the best opportunity to 'wander' and 'interact' with the participants, and 'unearth' or tap their precious knowledge with minimum contamination and distortion.

Further, Kvale described the research interview as a form of professional conversation between two people, which could be on the topic of daily life, on professional issues or purely a philosophical discourse. Distinguishing between these forms of professional conversations, Kvale explains that:

- the philosophical conversation seeks truth through an argumentative discourse;
- the therapeutic interview aims to instigate changes in the patient's personality and self-understanding through interpretations in an emotional interaction; while

- the research interview seeks, through questioning, to obtain knowledge of the subject's world. (p. 21).

Kvale goes on to note that interviews are among the best ways of getting to understand people and their experiences in life.

interviews are particularly suited for studying people's understanding of the meanings in their lived world, describing their experiences and self-understanding and clarifying and elaborating their own perspective on their lived world (p. 105).

Since this present study involves getting to understand people's perceptions of 'their lived world' (of the Catholic education system), interview was selected as the best method for obtaining the type of data required from the respondents to answer the questions in this research study.

It is clear from the above discussion that, interviewing in qualitative research is a process that involves an interaction between the researcher and the respondent. Such an interaction requires some specific techniques and approaches in the questioning and obtaining the desired answers or knowledge. In the next section, the various types of interviews and interviewing techniques used as research methods are discussed.

### **3.8 Types of Interviews as Research Tools**

There are different types of interview that can be adopted as research tools such as; the unstructured interview; the structured interview; the non-directive interview and the focused interview. An interview is described as 'structured' when there is an organised procedure and the content is prepared in advance. The wording of the questions and the sequence of asking are determined or structured by means of an interview schedule. The structured interview has the characteristic of "limiting the freedom of the interviewer to make some modifications" on the schedule during the interview sessions (Cohen & Manion 1994, p. 273). A trial or pilot interview is often necessary and advisable as an opportunity to make any modifications before the interview schedule is used in the main study.

The unstructured interview, on the other hand, has no predetermined wording of questions or sequence of asking. It is, therefore, an open and flexible situation where the interviewer has control of the sequence of asking, the content or the wording of the questions.

The non-directive interview is common in the therapeutic or psychiatric interviews. Here the interviewer has a minimal control or direction, while the respondent or informant has the freedom to express his or her feelings, opinions, or perceptions spontaneously. In non-directive interviews there are no set questions and no predetermined sequence or framework for recorded answers. The interviewer, however, has the freedom to elucidate any doubtful points, rephrase the respondents' answers and probe when necessary in order to obtain clear and valid answers.

The focused interview developed as a result of the need to introduce more interviewer control into the non-directive interview situation. The focused interview, as the name suggests, focuses on the responses to already known situations in which the respondent has been involved and which the interviewer had analysed prior to the interview. The data obtained from a focused interview is usually used to substantiate or reject previously formulated hypotheses.

In this present study it was decided to use the structured interviews in preference to other kinds of interviews as a source of data collection. The structured interview method has the advantage of the schedule being organised in advance, so that the questions are the same for every respondent. With a structured interview schedule, both the interviewer and the respondent are less likely to wander too far away from the topic or from the type of answers required for the particular study.

The next section considers the advantages and disadvantages for using interviews in research projects.

### **3.9 Advantages and Disadvantages of Interviews as Research Tools**

Interviews as research methods have both advantages and disadvantages as the

ensuing discussions can show. While interviews as a research tool are known to be expensive, most authors or researchers believe that these have more advantages than disadvantages in comparison with other research methods such as the survey questionnaires (Borg & Gall, 1989; Downs, Smeyak & Martin, 1980; Frey & Oishic, 1995).

Most interviews take place in a face-to-face situation, except in the case of telephone interviews. This situation for direct interaction provides the opportunity for immediate and quick feedback between both the interviewer and the respondent. The situation also allows for follow-up leads, which help in obtaining more data and clarity.

Interviews in research provide the interviewer with the opportunity to probe for more information in a situation where the respondent may not have understood the question in the first instance. Also, in a situation where the desired information concerns the negative aspects of a respondent or other persons, it may become difficult for the respondent to reveal such information except in the intimacy of a face-to-face interview. In such a situation the interview has advantage over any other form of data collection in qualitative research. Feedback can be readily and easily given and obtained, if the interviewer is able to carefully probe the respondent.

In a brief comparison between interviews and mailed questionnaires for instance, it is found that the content of the data collected through questionnaires are limited to the responses given in the answer sheets by the respondents. In the interview situations, on the other hand, the content of the data collected would be much richer because it comes from various sources including, field notes about verbal or non-verbal expressions, or even further probes of the respondent by the interviewer and some personal observations (d' Arbon, 1980), as well as tape-recording of such interviews (Borg & Gall, 1989; Frey & Oishic, 1995; Kvale, 1996; Thompson, 1996). Also, with the opportunity for on-the-spot probes or motivations in interviews, there is a consequent opportunity for immediate feedback.

The interview situation provides for increased rapport with the respondents. The interviewer is able to gain better and "direct co-operation of the respondent (at face-to-face interviews), observe difficulties and irritations and, therefore, can adjust the

interviews” (Downs *et al.*, 1980, p. 354).

A further advantage for using interviews as data collection tool is that the validity of the responses can be better guaranteed. This is so, because in the interview situation, the researcher is present while the particular respondent offers answers to the questions put to him or her. This is unlike other methods of data collection in which the researcher is not present, and, therefore, guarantee that there was no outside interference in the responses. The researcher can only rely on what is recorded in, say, a returned questionnaire for example, for validating the data contents (Borg & Gall, 1989).

The interview as research tool does have disadvantages as well. The disadvantages are sometimes hidden or inherent in the very nature of the method or design of the study and tools. For instance, Borg and Gall (1989) point out the possibility of the very strengths of interviews becoming also the avenue for weakness and disadvantages in the following remarks:

flexibility, adaptability, and human interaction that are unique strengths of the interview also allow subjectivity and possible bias that in some research situations are its greatest weakness (p. 448).

Another possible avenue for bias to set in and disadvantage interview as research tool is when both the interviewer and the respondent are related to each other at a somewhat personal level. This type of ‘personal’ relationship could result from common professional experience or religious affinity. d’Arbon (1980) reports such a situation in his work, and notes how such “personal interviews (interaction) were marked by the use of informal language on the part of the principals” (p. 243). However, there was no such situation in the present study, and none of the respondents had any particular and close affinity with the researcher.

In this present project, interview was, however, chosen as data collection method because the researcher is of the view that the advantages have outweighed the disadvantages.

In the next section, the choice of participants in the study is discussed.



### 3.10 Choice of Participants to the Project

The choice or selection of interviewees is often determined or influenced by the type of information the researcher is seeking (Krathwohl, 1998). It follows that the researcher should know or at least have an idea of what type of information he or she requires, and who holds such information.

In this project, the type of information required by the researcher was expected to be obtained from those described as 'significant stakeholders' in the Sydney Catholic Education system, particularly those involved in the practice and implementation of the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney. The research project was seeking the type of information that can best describe the different perceptions of 'significant stakeholders' about the Nature, Outcomes and the Effectiveness of the implementation of these Processes.

The term 'stakeholders' refers to people who are either involved in or are to be affected by a program (Sanders, 1994). Sanders gives a typical list of stakeholders which "include individuals and groups whose work is being studied, those who will be affected by the results, community organisations and the general public" (p. 25).

In the case of this present study about the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney, stakeholders were selected from among those who are involved in the actual designing and implementing of these processes. These include senior staff of the Central and Regional offices; those who are directing the implementation process, such as the Consultants, the Principals and other staff members in the schools.

In a study designed differently, the list of stakeholders (participants) could be expanded to include: those who are to be directly affected by the outcomes of the program such as the students and the parents, and the likely consumers of the outcomes of quality education, such as the local communities and the general public, departments, industries or establishments that may need to employ the schools leavers. However, for the scope and structure of the present study, the selection of the

*'significant stakeholders'* was limited to only those people that are presently and directly involved in the implementation process, and who can make significant contribution to the study. Thus, they are not only significant stakeholders in Catholic education, but are also referred to in this study as *'key players'* in the quality assurance processes.

School Principals were requested to nominate teachers who were identified as those who have had some involvement in the implementation of the processes. Cohen and Manion (1994) had pointed out that in a focused interview "the subjective experiences of the people who have been exposed to the situation will also determine the choice" (p. 289). It was necessary, therefore, to get the Principals to recommend those they know to have been exposed to the processes. The level of understanding and involvement of respondents in the subject under study would play a major role in quality of the information the researcher was going to receive.

Available literature on the Quality Assurance Processes published by the CEO Sydney, including newsletters to school parents, information sheets and the CEO's Directory and Guide to Catholic schools (CEO 1995, 1999), the Annual Reports (CEO 1993, 1997) provided a rich source for information that guided the selection of other participants in this present project. The researcher also considered it appropriate to carry out personal consultations and discussions with some senior staff of the CEO Sydney and schools Principals. In this way, *'key players'* or *'stakeholders'* in the quality assurance processes were identified and invited to participate in the research project.

The *key players* or *'significant stakeholders'* selected included:

- The Executive Director of Schools, Sydney Archdiocese;
- Senior officers at the Central Office of the CEO, Sydney who have connections with the quality assurance processes;
- The CEO Regional Directors;
- Select Regional Consultants for Sydney Catholic schools; and
- The Principals, Assistant Principals and some teachers from selected primary and secondary schools across the regions.

Altogether, 35 respondents were proposed in the design as participants and each to be interviewed only once, and for the purposes of obtaining the data needed for the study of the Nature, Outcomes and Effectiveness of the Implementation of the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO.

**Informed/Consent Letter**--a requirement of the Research Ethics Committee--was sent by the researcher to the individuals who had been selected as participants. This raised the awareness of the need for confidentiality, discretion and the right of the participants to choose to participate in the project voluntarily. The Informed/Consent Letter also explained the purpose of the research, explained the need and requested permission for the use of a tape-recorder at the interviews sessions. The point was emphasised that the data collected were to be sensitively handled and applied for the purposes of the study only. An example of the Informed/Consent Letter is provided as **Appendix E**.

### 3.11 Ethics Clearance in Research Project

Ethics in itself is the study of standards of conduct and moral judgement. In a research context, ethics are applied to denote the system or code of morals that are involved in the process of data collection, data management and the welfare of those concerned. Ethical theorists argue that because social life is characterised by suspicion and deception, there is no reason to think that a research project that has a lot to do with the people, should be otherwise (Finch, 1986; Kvale, 1996; Merriam, 1988; Minichiello *et al.*, 1995; Walker, 1980;). Interviews or observation could be a means to an end, and could enrich the parties concerned, but could also impoverish them if ethical issues are not properly attended to. Interviewees cannot always control all aspects of their self-presentation that is involved in the whole exercise. Similarly, the researcher's or interviewer's bias and assumptions are often reflected in the research.

A further ethical issue concerns the use and management of the data collected in research. The data must not be used for anything else other than for the purposes of the research without necessary ethics clearance. Merriam (1988) quotes from Kilman

(1986) to bring this point home:

Serious ethical problems arise only when respondents agree to provide information for one purpose and the data are then used for a clearly different purpose (cited in Merriam 1988, p. 182).

A researcher must, therefore, be honest and follow rules and guidelines of ethics, and open about the research data.

In the present study the researcher was fully aware of the Research Ethics Committee requirements and their implications for conducting a research study of this nature. Accordingly, a formal Ethics Clearance was obtained from the Research Ethics Committee certifying that the proposed study and the researcher met the necessary requirements (see Appendix C).

### **3.12 Conducting Research Interviews**

Patton (1990) had remarked that “the quality of the information obtained during an interview is largely dependent on the interviewer” (p. 279). This immediately indicates that conducting an interview places some considerable responsibilities on the shoulders of the interviewer who also has much to contribute in the areas of validity and reliability of the interviews. The interviewer, therefore, needs to be sufficiently prepared for the exercise if he or she hopes to obtain reliable and valid results. He or she should have specific focus and direction as to how the interviews may be better conducted to achieve expected results.

To this end, Maykut and Morehouse (1994) have some advice to offer which was considered appropriate to apply in this present study. First of all Maykut and Morehouse recommend that a suitable interactive relationship should be established between the respondents and the interviewer. Drawing upon the views of Mishler (1986), they recommend that the interviewer should not only see the respondent as a research collaborator, but also should show “through words and behaviours, that the interviewee is a collaborator in the research” (p. 98). In this way, the interviewee will be empowered by the interviewer, and such empowerment will help to establish and maintain a positive interviewing climate. Where this is not the case, the opposite situation might be the climate of alienation which could adversely affect the validity

and the reliability of the information given and obtained.

Again, to conduct a fruitful interview, Maykut and Morehouse (1994) go on to advise that the interviewer makes proper preparations by securing all that will be needed. All material and equipment must be gathered and made ready for the interviews. These include the tape recorder, cassette tapes and all that helps to make them functional, the interview guide or the schedules, pen and paper, and the like. The interviewer should do well to keep spares on hand to avoid disappointment. Also, the interviewer should make sure the interview takes place promptly at the scheduled time and place. Some time is taken to do some preliminary “checking to see whether there is any background noise that could interfere with the recording” and “testing the tape recorder with the interviewee to select the right volume” (p. 99).

Informed by numerous experiences in review work on interview procedures, Tuckman (1994) advised that during the meeting, the interviewer should explain further to the respondent the nature and purpose of the interview. Such an initial gesture would help to make the respondent feel at ease and have an added confidence.

### **3.13 Interviewer Performance and Behaviour**

A major instrument of data collection is undoubtedly, the interviewer. The interviewer as an instrument can have some effect on the validity and reliability of the data content. The quality of performance of the interviewer has a vital influence on the quality of the interviews and responses received.

It is for that reason that Krathwohl (1998) rightly advises that

a qualitative study observer (or interviewer) must protect against a variety of rival explanations . . . such as the possible effects of the observer’s prevailing attitude and values that can affect the observation or the interviewing process (p. 665).

Accordingly, this study adopted an interviewer’s performance evaluation program designed by Cannell *et al.* (1975) as a measure for guiding any prevailing attitudes or values. This program evaluates the performance of the interviewer under nine different items as can be seen on the summary in Table 3.1 with explanatory notes.

This evaluation program has the ability to provide the means, or itself, become the means for further assessing the validity and reliability of the interviewer and the interviewees themselves.

**Table 3.1:** Summary of the Evaluation Program for Interviewer's Performance.

HEADING (CODE)	EXPLANATION (DEFINITION)
1. Correct Question Asking	Interviewer reads question either exactly as printed on the interview schedule or with minor modifications which do not alter the frame of reference.
2. Incorrect Question Asking	Interviewer either significantly alters part of question, or omits part of question, or replaces question with own statement, or reads question which should have been skipped.
3. Probes or Clarifies Non-directly	Interviewer either makes up in own words a probe which is non-directive, repeats all or part of either question or respondent's answer in a non-directive manner, or confirms a frame of reference for respondent correctly.
4. Probes or Clarifies Directively	Interviewer either makes up probe which is directive, repeats question or respondent's answer incorrectly, gives a directive introduction, or confirms a frame of reference incorrectly.
5. Other Appropriate Behaviour	Interviewer gives either acceptable task-oriented clarification or other appropriate feedback.
6. Other Inappropriate Behaviour	Interviewer either interrupts respondent, gives personal opinions, or records responses incorrectly on questionnaire.
7. Non-recorded Activity	Interviewer either omits a question, or there is missing data.
8. Pace	Interviewer conducts interview either too slowly or too rapidly.
9. Background of Study	Interviewer mentions own name, the study sponsorship, respondent selection, anonymity, purpose of study.

(Source: Cannell *et al.* (1975, p. 18).

The next section discusses the format for the interview questions and the mode of response suitable for this type of study.

### 3.14 Question Format and Mode of Response

Interview questions are a major 'instrument' for data collection in research interviews. Research instruments do play significant roles in shaping both the format of the questions and responses in the interviews (Cohen & Manion, 1994; Schwarz, 1999). The answers obtained, on the other hand, not only influence the results but also determine the sort of conclusions that may be reached in a particular study

Tuckman (1978) had pointed out that "since people find it easier to talk than to write . . . more information is generated through the interactive-conversation" (p. 211). In the face-to-face interview situation, there is opportunity to explain and assure the parties of their privacy and security.

The interview questions formats are apparently determined by the nature of the research, the type of information the researcher is seeking and the possible means by which such information may be acquired. Thus, in this present project, due to the nature of the study and the type of information required, it was decided to employ the structured interview questions format with its corresponding response mode. A prepared structured interview schedule is always a useful guide, for in this way, the interviewer can be sure that every item is treated equally, and every respondent is asked the same questions.

Just as the kind of information desired by the researcher dictates the interview question formats, the mode of response is determined by the style of questions on the interview schedule. Just as there are varied ways of asking questions, there are also varied modes of response from which the researcher can choose. There are no specified roles for the choice of response mode. However, drawing upon Tuckman (1978, 1994), Cohen and Manion (1994) have described seven different response modes that could be used in the qualitative research interviews. There is what is called *the unstructured response*. This response mode gives the respondent the liberty to choose how to answer the questions at the interview. Then there is the *fill-in response mode* which requires the respondent to supply rather than choose a response. According to Cohen and Manion, the response in this case, "is often limited to a word

or phrase" (p. 278).

Other response modes described by these authors include: the *tabular response* mode, the *scale response* mode, the *ranking response* mode, the *check-list response* mode and *categorical response* mode (see Cohen & Manion, 1994, pp. 279-281).

Whatever is the question format, whatever the response mode and whatever type of information being sought, Schwarz (1999) urges that the attitude of truth and relevance should prevail in the exercise. Schwarz advises that

speakers should try to be informative, truthful, relevant, and clear, and listeners (interviewers) interpret the speakers' utterances 'on the assumption that they are trying to live up to the ideals (p. 94).

Schwarz goes on to describe this attitude of being truthful, clear and relevant as "rules of co-operative conversational conduct . . . essential for understanding how respondents make sense of questions asked them . . ." (p. 95).

In this research project, it was designed that the mode of response followed such 'rules of co-operative conversational conduct', so that the respondents could respond to the questions with much freedom, and at the same time, were not allowed to wander away from the main topic and the important issues (Kvale, 1996).

In the next section the methods of recording and preserving the interviews responses are discussed.

### **3.15 Tape-recording of the Interviews**

Tape-recording of an interview is seen today as a usual and acceptable method in research (Kvale, 1996; Rubin & Rubin, 1995; Thompson, 1996). Whenever tape recorders are to be used, as was the case in this present study, the consent of the respondent must first be obtained. Kvale's (1996) work on interviews has identified some inherent advantages and disadvantages in the use of tape recording. Kvale acknowledges that the tape-recording and the consequent transcription of interviews are time consuming and financially costly if compared with the observation and notes



taking processes. At the same time, he notes that the use of tape-recording at the interviews gives the interviewer the chance to “concentrate on other dynamics of the interview . . . while the words and their tone, pauses, and the like, are recorded in a permanent form that can be returned to again and again for re-listening” (p. 160).

In ordinary circumstances, however, it should be expected that some or all of the respondents could object to the use of tape-recorders. This is understandable since the recorded word on the tape can become an indelible piece of evidence for or against any speaker. To allay such fears and improve the chances of accurate data, a few precautions were taken before the interviews proceeded in this research. Paramount among them was the timely and formal request for permission, and also, the effective explanation offered by the researcher for the need to use a tape-recorder in the research. The respondents were formally guaranteed the protection of their privacy and confidentiality. Above all, the assurance was given that the interviews were not to discuss any personal matters, except the organisational matters related to the Quality Assurance Processes of the Catholic Education Office, Sydney. The respondents had the assurance that their participation in the research was voluntary. They were free to withdraw from it at any time, if they had any objections, including if they objected to the use of tape-recorder.

Thompson (1996) has discussed the use of tape-recorders in research interviews, and is convinced that the use of tape-recorder at interviews makes the interviewer “freer to concentrate on what is being said, rather than on struggling to record it accurately . . .” (p. 5). Drawing on Gorden to support the argument Thompson cites situations in which the use of tape-recorder at interviews are advantageous such as:

- a situation where the information is complex;
- where the flow of relevant information is rapid;
- when there is a wish to explore unanticipated types of response and there is uncertainty of relevance;
- where there is significance in the precise words used and the order in which the ideas are expressed;
- where the sequence of the topic is unstructured; and

- where there is a desire to compromise personal relations.  
(Thompson, 1996, p. 5).

In this present project, it was decided that a tape-recorder be used because of the advantages listed above which outweigh any disadvantages that may exist.

### **3.16 Transcription of Tape-recorded Interviews**

To attempt to analyse interviews directly from tape-recordings is extremely difficult, if not impossible. The initial and proper procedure therefore, is to have the interviews transcribed into a written mode of communication. Tuckman (1994) noted that while the interview is an acceptable method for data collection in research, the data cannot be useful until they have been converted into a form that can be analysed. It is through the process of transcription that the interview can be converted into analysable form. However, the process of transcription involves some methodical and theoretical problems for the interviewer which require time and skill to handle.

In the first instance, care must be taken about the method of recording the transcription. Maykut and Morehouse (1994) suggest two methods: one is to “print clearly in dark ink” which can make a deep impression, another is to “type the transcript using a word processor program on the computer” (p. 100). The latter has many advantages in that the typed copies can be stored in the word processor for further editing and for the analysis exercise. When this writer was drawing up the design for this study, the decision was made that the tape-recorded interviews would be transcribed verbatim, noting all the ‘ums’ and ‘ahs’ to make sure that no piece of the information would be missed or overlooked. This decision resulted in a large volume of written words, but it had its advantages in that little or no information was overlooked or lost. Such diligence and thoroughness in transcription is important because, as Maykut and Morehouse further explain, “words are the data of qualitative research, and it is important to carefully and completely transcribe the audio-taped interview” (p. 101). A partial transcription is likely to result in the loss of some of the data needed for the study.

According to Kvale (1996), the art of transcribing is a way of “translating from an oral

language, with its own set of rules, to a written language with another set of rules” (p. 165). He goes on to add that “transcripts are not copies or representations of some original reality, they are interpretative constructions that are useful tools for given purposes” (p. 165).

This understanding of transcription implies that, a transcribed text is subject to the ideological and theoretical preoccupations of the transcriber, and such preoccupations are most likely to influence the validity of the transcript. Transcription involves or implies some kind of interpretation or translation which can be influenced or undermined by a number of other issues. It is evident that if two different persons transcribe the same interview, there will always be some differences in the two versions of the transcript due to, either the level of hearing ability of the scribe, the style of his or her writing, or the clarity of the recorded words.

In some situations, the question or the response may be ambiguous and makes it difficult or improbable for it to be interpreted in one and the same way. A typical example of an ambiguous situation is offered by Kvale in his interview reports on “Grades” (p. 163). In that work, the questions or remarks such as: “because you don’t get grades” and “of course you don’t like grades” (p. 163), certainly presented difficulties where the response was “Yes, I think that’s true . . .”

A text such as this presents some difficulties in the interpretation because the transcription is not complete and clear. It is difficult to say what the response refers to in a situation such as this. The options open to solution to the problems may rest in providing clear and useful instructions and having a check for accuracy of the actual transcripts. This implies that each researcher needs to carefully consider what is a useful (transcription) method for his or her research project.

In this present project verbatim transcription of all tape-recorded interviews was decided on as suitable for the purpose and intentions of the study. It was considered that a verbatim method of transcription can also serve as a means of checking on accuracy of the data.

### 3.17 Content Analysis Process

Content analysis as a process is better seen as an analysis strategy rather than a data collection method. Tuckman (1994) had pointed out that although interviewing is a good and acceptable method for data collection in research, the data so collected cannot be useful until they are converted into analysable form and actually analysed. The first step towards such conversion is the transcription of the tape-recorded interviews into a text or written form. Miles and Huberman (1994) describe an interview analysis as a process “consisting of three concurrent flows of activity: data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing/verification” (p. 10). They further point out that in qualitatively oriented research project, data reduction, which is done through selection, summarising or paraphrasing and noting the themes, occurs continuously throughout the life of the research.

So, right from the time the research questions are being formulated and data collection approaches or procedures are selected, the process of data analysis (reduction) is anticipated. A data display activity is some organised assembly of information that has been collected. The investigator will eventually be able to act on these displayed data and draw some conclusions in the study. This process or method of analysis involves deciding on the rows and columns of matrix -- what data and in what form could that data be entered in the different cells.

In qualitative research, especially in field-work, the drawing of conclusions and verification activities start as early as when the data collection starts (Tuckman, 1994). This involves the process of trying to decide what certain things mean; taking note of how regular they are and in what patterns they appear; and making some propositions.

Miles and Huberman (1994) have advised that researchers should not hold very tightly to such early conclusions or verifications. They argue that in qualitative research the “final conclusions may not appear until data collection is over, depending on the size of the corpus of field notes, the coding, storage and retrieval methods used ...” (p. 11).

Drawing upon the work of Strauss and Corbin (1990), Maykut and Morehouse (1994) discussed three strategic approaches that could be applied in analysing data in qualitative research. In the first approach a researcher is likened to a journalist who simply presents the data as they have been collected without any form of analysis. This approach, according to them, aims to allow the “research participants speak for themselves as much as possible” (p. 122).

In the second approach, the researcher describes accurately what he/she has understood, and reconstructs it into a recognisable reality for those who have participated in the study. At this stage, some form of interpretation and selection are inevitable. The researcher becomes a narrator of the stories that he or she has woven together from the words of the participants’ and field-note quotes.

The third approach to data analysis builds up naturally from the second approach. Here the researcher begins to build or develop theories. This involves the highest level of interpretation and abstraction from the data in order to arrive at the concepts of the theory.

Marshall and Rossman (1989) define content analysis as “a technique for making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages . . . ”(p. 98). Content analysis, as a process, is applied in a variety of ways in research projects. Usually, after the data have been obtained in a study project, patterns inherent in the data are identified and, where necessary or conventional, categorised or codified. This process or technique can be applied in the analysis of textbooks, novels, newspaper, political speeches and other forms of communication. More especially, the coding and categorising techniques can be used to analyse the content of interviews by noting the recurrence of word, phrases and themes that are specifically essential to the aims of a particular study. Further, Marshall and Rossman have described content analysis method as having great strengths in that it is flexible, fluid, and of wide applications. They add that, it is the researcher who uses the method that can “determine where the greatest emphasis lies . . . and he or she does not set out to prove or disprove a hypothesis by gathering fact to support her position” (p. 100).

However, these authors warn that content analysis can be misleading or biased if the researcher does not properly select the sample of the content to be studied. Such content must be pertinent to the research objectives, and not just what is available. That which is available must necessarily be that which is related to the research objectives.

The book, *Interviews* by Kvale (1996) which incorporates most of the above, tends to offer a recent and elaborate discussion on the issues of methods of interview analysis that was adopted and incorporated into the design of this present project. Kvale has proposed *meaning condensation* as one of the approaches to interview analysis method. He states:

Meaning condensation entails an abridgement of the meanings expressed by the interviewees into shorter formulations. Long statements are compressed into briefer statements in which the main sense of what was said is rephrased in fewer words. Meaning condensation involves a reduction of large interview texts into briefer, more succinct formulations (p. 192).

This is a theoretical method which involves the reduction of a large interview text into briefer and more succinct formulations through the following five steps:

- Step 1            Reading the whole interview through to get a sense of the whole;
- Step 2            determining the natural meaning units as expressed by the Subject;
- Step 3            stating as simply as possible the themes that dominate the natural meaning units of the subjects' answers;
- Step 4            interrogating the meaning units in terms of the specific purpose of the study;
- Step 5            tying up together all the essential themes into a descriptive statement.

An example of the use of this process was found applied in an interview study on learning by Giorgi (1975) reported in Kvale (1996, pp. 27-28). In that study, the interview transcripts were presented in their natural form/unit, while the central themes were written beside the original natural texts.

Thus, the method for the interview analysis in this project is designed to incorporate: reading through the whole interview to have a sense of the whole; determining the natural meaning as expressed by the subjects; stating the dominant themes as simply as possible; and understanding the respondents' statements in the researcher's viewpoint without prejudice. In some instances, selected quotes from the interview would be presented and applied to the analysis process. Such interview quotes, when used, are expected to give the reader a feel of the impression of the interactions that could be experienced at the interview conversation. It would also exemplify the type of material used by the researcher in his or her analysis.

Further, this method makes it possible for the researcher to determine the perceptions of the respondents about the topic, in this case, the Nature, Outcomes and Effectiveness of the Implementation of the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney. All tape-recorded interviews would first be transcribed verbatim into a readable and written form. Then by the process of *meaning condensation*, themes and central ideas would be identified for proper analysis.

When the central or essential ideas and statements were identified, a more critical analysis of the identified issues would be carried out. At that stage the analysis focused on what issues are common among both categories of the respondents (stakeholders), and what are not common. It also considered whether one category is influenced by the other, such as whether the administrative officers influence the school staff or vice versa. Then it would be possible to draw inferences and offer any suggestions about a future direction of the processes that have been studied in this research.

Figure 3.1 is a flow chart showing the summary of the overall design and methodology applied in the study from the data collection to the conclusions.

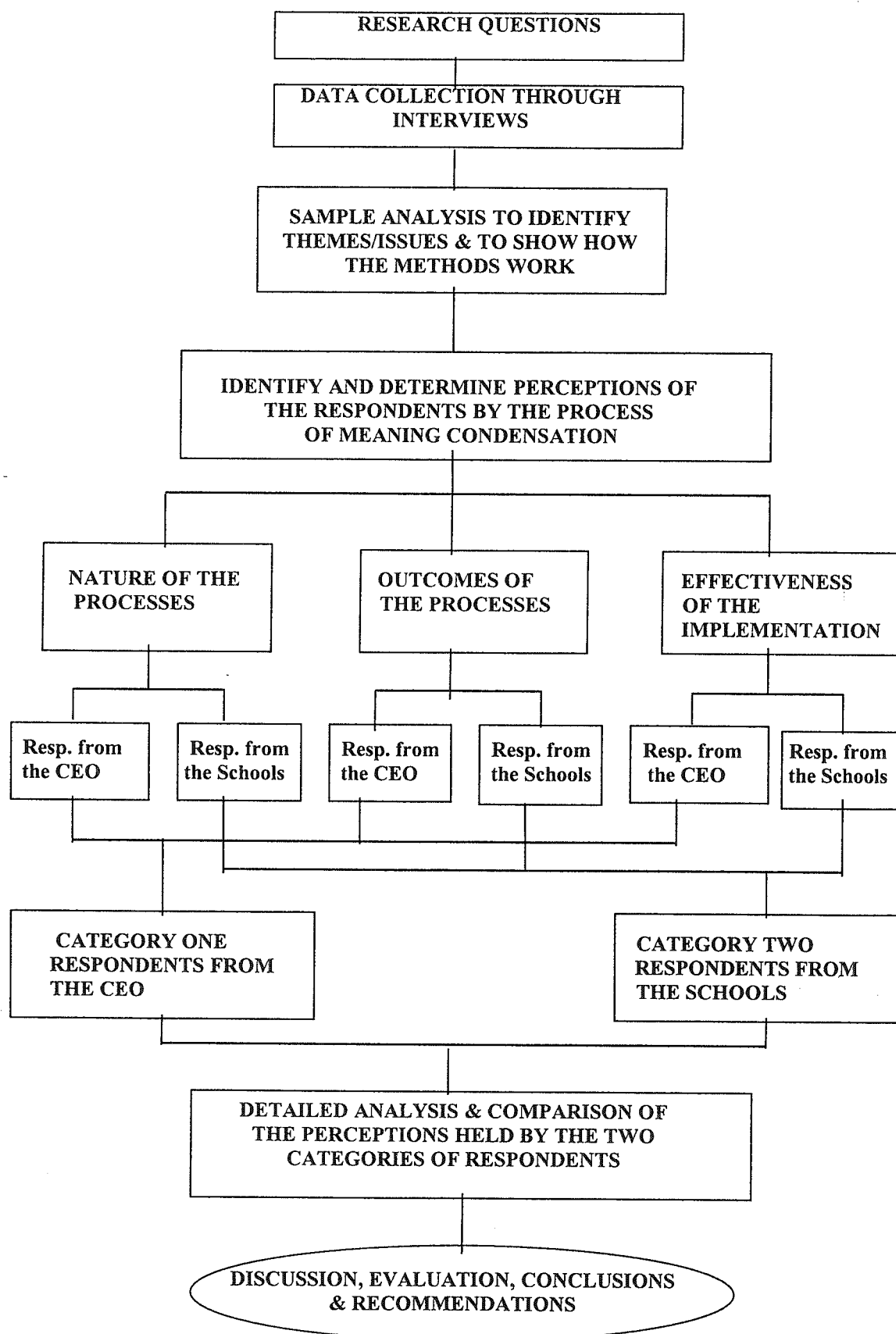
A closer study of the figure reveals that the main source of data collection is by interviews. Samples of the interviews will be preliminarily analysed to show that the adopted methods and designs actually work, and can be used successfully in the entire study.

Again, it can be observed that the respondents (participants) for the interviews come from two institutions and are classed in Two Categories or groups. The first category comprises the senior staff from both the Central and Regional offices of the Catholic Education Office (CEO), Sydney. The second category comprises the school principals and staff of six Catholic systemic schools selected from the three regions in the Archdiocese of Sydney

The data derived from the interviews were subjected to analysis and examination to identify any differences or similarities in perceptions between the respondents in category one and those in category two. The sample analysis and comparison of perceptions are contained in Chapter Five as parts of the Main Study reports.



FIGURE 3.1: FLOWCHART OF THE DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY



### 3.18 Summary

In this chapter, the importance and necessity of proper design and methodology for a research project have been discussed. The discussion has outlined and justified the choices of the various techniques and procedures employed in carrying out the present study. The structured interview was adopted in the methodology as the main source of data collection, while meaning condensation was incorporated in the design for the data analysis. Meaning condensation process involves in the main: the reduction of large interview text into a briefer formulations; the determination of the natural meaning units as expressed by the subject (respondent); and the interpretation of the meaning units in terms of the specific purpose of the study.

Sanders (1994) in noting the distinctions between qualitative and quantitative research data analysis pointed out that: “for qualitative analysis the observation protocols, categories of information and methods of summarisation are often not predetermined” (p. 171). In qualitative research, even though the methodology is identified, the data analysis procedures and techniques designed and discussed, these should not be considered as fixed and final. To do so may amount to wrongly predetermining the results of the study. The advice, therefore, is that the qualitative researcher remains open-minded, and expects more issues to emerge as the study progresses. Thus, in this present project, it was expected that some modifications of aspects of the methodology may become possible and indeed, necessary, as the project unfolded.

The next chapter reports on the Pilot Study in which the design, the methodology and all the techniques proposed for this present project were first trialled.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **THE PILOT STUDY**

In this chapter the Pilot Study carried out as a prelude to the Main Study project is reported. The Pilot Study was deemed necessary in the present study for a number of reasons. First of all, the Pilot Study was designed to be a possible means of testing for the suitability of the research instruments, the design as well as all the techniques and procedures involved in the methodology proposed for the present Research project. The Pilot was also to become an opportunity for the researcher to gain practical experience in conducting research interviews before embarking on the Main study interviews. The Pilot Study was conducted and reported under the following headings:

- Preparation of interview schedule for the Pilot Study;
- Selection and invitation of participants to the Pilot Study;
- Sites for the Pilot Study Interviews;
- Conducting the Pilot Study Interviews;
- Timing for the Pilot Study Interview sessions;
- Tape-recording and transcription of the Pilot Study Interviews;
- Analysis of the Pilot Study Interviews;
- Evaluation of the Pilot Study; and
- Result of the Pilot Study.

#### **4.1 Preparation of Interview Schedule**

Cohen and Manion (1994) had pointed out that research interviews questions are almost always determined by the nature of the research question or problem and by the type of information the researcher is seeking. Also, the modes of response to the questions are

generally dictated by the methods employed for acquiring the desired information. In this present project, due to its nature and the type of information required, it was decided to use open-ended interview questions for data collection. Open-ended questions offer the researcher more opportunity for extensive questioning or probing for more answers and clarifying misunderstandings where there are any. At the same time, open-ended questions offer the respondents the freedom they need to express themselves in their own words without being limited to specific terms or ideas. A further advantage for employing the open-ended questions format is that, during the further questioning and/or probing, some unexpected or anticipated answers may emerge and add to the richness of the data gathered.

Cohen and Manion (1994), Tuckman (1994), Rubin and Rubin (1995), Kvale (1996), and Cannell *et al.* (1975), among others, speak of the importance of the proper conduct of research interviews. As Cohen and Manion see it, interview is a two-person or more interaction (conversation) which is 'initiated and directed by the interviewer for the specific purpose of obtaining information' (p. 271). For such information to be relevant the interaction or conversation must be guided in a way that is relevant to the research intention. As Rubin and Rubin (1995) have pointed out, interviewing may be best described as

a guided conversation in which the interviewer guides the conversation, not only in terms of the questions asked and the flow of the topic, but also in terms of the emotional tone and intensity of the interaction (p. 128).

### The Interview Schedule

The interview schedule for this Pilot project was designed to be in three sections. This was a deliberate arrangement to coincide with the three key items being considered in the project- *the Nature, the Outcomes and the Effectiveness of the implementation of the Processes.*

1. The questions in this section were designed to acquire information related to the nature of the processes as follows:

*What do you understand by the term Quality Assurance?*

*What do you understand by the term Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney?*

*Could you name the different components of the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney?*

*What are these Processes designed to achieve both in the CEO and in the schools?*

*When and how did you first become aware of these Processes?*

*Were you satisfied with the way these Processes were brought to your awareness or would you rather suggest alternative way(s)?*

*How involved are you in the implementation of these Quality Assurance Processes in your school (if you are in a school) or in the CEO (if you are a staff of the CEO)?*

These draft questions in this area were to allow the respondents to name and/or describe the nature of the Processes, as well as state how and by what means they became aware of the existence of the Processes.

2. The questions in this section were designed to acquire information related to the outcomes of these processes as follows:

*What are some of the positive outcomes you can observe in the schools or the CEO, Sydney as a result of the implementation of the Quality Assurance Processes?*

*What are some of the negative outcomes you can observe in the schools or in the CEO, Sydney as a result of the implementation of the Quality Assurance Processes?*

*Are there some desirable outcomes that you think are yet to be achieved through the implementation of these Processes?*

*How do you think such will be achieved given the current form of the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO Sydney?*

The first two questions in this area were designed to allow the respondents to name both the positive and negative outcomes which they have observed as the result of the implementation of the Processes in schools or in the CEO system.

The next two questions allowed the respondents to say what were/are the desired outcomes, whether or not such have been achieved and what more could possibly be achieved through these Processes.

3. The questions in this section were designed to acquire information related to the effectiveness of the implementation of the processes as follows:

*What factors do you know that are assisting the effective implementation of the Processes, and why?*

*What factors do you know that are hindering the effective implementation of the Processes, and why?*

*What aspects of the Quality Assurance Processes do you like and why?*

*What aspects of the Quality Assurance Processes do you not like and why?*

*Would you offer any suggestions for possible modifications of the current form of the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney?*

Respondents were also asked to state the various aspects of these Quality Assurance Processes that they liked or disliked, and also to show reason for saying so. Such information was to be critically analysed to determine the degree of influence the implementation of the Processes have had on the respondents or the schools. At the end, every respondent was given the opportunity to offer his or her own assessment of the entire quality assurance processes designed and implemented by the CEO, Sydney. The final and common question for all, therefore, was designed thus:

*Overall, what is your general assessment of the present Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney?*

Altogether there were 17 questions initially drafted for the Pilot Study interviews. As will be seen later, a few modifications were effected on the draft after the Pilot so that the schedule became adapted for the Main Study interviews.

The next section describes how the participants were selected and invited to the Pilot Study project.

#### **4.2 Selection and invitation of Participants to the Pilot Study**

Generally the participants in a project study are drawn from the targeted population of the proposed study so that they are knowledgeable in that special area or field. As much as possible, participants in the pilot study were selected from among those people who are in the situation close to the proposed main study. In this present case, the invited participants were those expected to have been involved, in one way or the other, in the implementation of the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney. These were believed to be among the employees, and therefore, key players or stakeholders in the Catholic Education System of Sydney Archdiocese. As a Pilot Study, the interview was carried out with only a selected sample of those regarded or designated as key players or stakeholders in the system.

Also, the selection was limited and based on the knowledge that such selected participants had to come from among those who have personally been involved in the actual implementation of the Quality Assurance Processes. The expectation here was that, having been personally involved, they would have sufficient understanding of the topic, and be able to express their perceptions of the Processes. Those selected included a senior staff of the CEO, a School Principal, and some classroom teachers. These were contacted first by phone, and then arrangements were made for the pilot interviews which took place at their respective places of work, at their convenience.

An Informed Consent/Information Letter was not used as the telephone and personal contact proved to be sufficient for both the researcher and the proposed respondents to establish good relationships for the pilot interviews. A comprehensive introduction and explanation, however, was always offered by the researcher before each pilot interview proceeded in order to re-assure the respondents and further enhance a free and non-threatening atmosphere.

#### **4.3. Sites for the Pilot Study Interviews**

The research interview is sometimes described as a process or a way of 'digging into' the lived-world and lived-experience of the interviewee (Ellis & Flaherty, 1992; Kvale, 1996; Minichiello, Aroni, Timewell & Alexander, 1995). To effectively capture and "dig into" such lived-experience it is important that the interviews take place at the respondents' places of work so that their life-world situation could make them more at home to speak freely and with confidence. Consequently, the interviews for this Pilot Study were conducted at the respondents' places of work and at the negotiated times that were convenient to both interviewer and the respondents. Thus the respondent from the CEO staff member was interviewed at the Catholic Education Office, while the Principal and teachers were met in their schools.

#### **4.4. Conducting the Pilot Study Interviews**

Some of the rules guiding the proper conduct of research interviews that were applied in this present Pilot Study interview included making sure that:

1. the questions were asked correctly on the part of the interviewer  
(interviewer performance);
2. the respondents were not intimidated in any way;
3. the respondents were not allowed to wander away from the topic,  
(quality of responses/interviewee performance);



4. there were proper and timely probes and clarification for more information;
5. leading questions were avoided as much as possible; and
6. above all, confidentiality was maintained during and after the interview exercise.

A preliminary greeting, introduction and explanation of the topic and the aim of the study always preceded the actual interviews. These 'preliminary door-step rituals' have both the social and psychological effects/influences on the relationship that needs to develop and grow between the interviewer and the respondents throughout the interview session. For a further guide, and to enhance easy communication, a copy of the schedule was always provided to the respondent. Although a copy of the schedule was given to the interviewee, each question was read out aloud by the interviewer in the hearing of the interviewee so as to capture the sense of interaction and conversation, and also, for the purposes of having the entire session recorded on the tape-recorder. It was in this way that the tape-recording made much sense when the tapes were played back later, and listened to by the interviewer for the purposes of analysis.

#### **4.5. Timing for the Pilot Study Interview Session**

The duration of each interview was recorded from the time the respondent began to answer the first of the open-ended questions till when the tape was switched off. This part of the exercise was very necessary, as it would later enhance the preparation of a proper timetable for the main study. Although some of the interviews did not come out clearly on tape, it was still possible to estimate the time taken for one pilot interview session. It was observed that each interview session lasted approximately, 25 - 30 minutes. The record shown on Table 4.1 was maintained and calculated to show the 'mean' time for the Pilot interviews.

Table 4.1 Approximate time taken for pilot interviews session.

Interviews with Respondents	Duration in minutes
CEO Senior Staff	28 minutes.
Principal	30 minutes.
Class Teacher 1.	25 minutes.
Class Teacher 2.	28 minutes.
Class Teacher 3.	28 minutes.
<u>Class Teacher 4.</u>	<u>30 minutes.</u>

The 'Mean Time' gives an idea for how long one interview may go on during the Main Study. An average time of an extra five minutes was used in each case to ask for feedback from the respondents on how the session went and what they thought of the quality of the questions as well as the interviewer's approach or behaviour. Such feedback was to become a useful guide to the researcher while preparing the schedule and during the main study interviews.

#### 4.6. Tape-recording and Transcription of Pilot Study Interviews

The Pilot interviews were audio tape-recorded. A verbatim transcription method was adopted for the interviews. A 'Verbatim transcription' implies that the data source was presented as an uninterrupted and unedited experience of the lived-world of the respondents. Hence the methodology was adopted so that no part of the recorded conversation could be missed.

Incidentally, only two of those tape-recorded interviews were audible enough and therefore, possible to transcribe for this Pilot Study. This error was blamed on a faulty

tape-recorder, and it was a good lesson and experience for the researcher. The lesson was learnt and better equipment was provided for the Main Study interviews. However, from the data generated by the transcribed and, therefore, useable interviews and from notes taken by the Researcher, it was still possible to carry out some preliminary analysis and assess the effectiveness and suitability of the methodology and the instruments.

#### 4.7. Analysis of the Pilot Study Interviews

In the present project, *Meaning Condensation* approach was adopted for the data analysis. Meaning condensation, according to Kvale (1996) “entails an abridgement of the meanings expressed by the interviewees into shorter formulations” (p. 192). As stated earlier in the methodology section, this approach follows five key steps which include:

1. reading the whole interview through to get the sense of the whole;
2. determining the natural units of meaning as expressed by the subject/respondent;
3. stating as simple as possible, the theme that dominates the natural meaning units as the researcher understands it, but read without prejudice;
4. interrogating the meaning units in terms of the specific purpose of the study; and
5. condensing the expressed meanings into more and more essential meanings of the subject of study.

Table 4.2 below is an example of the Pilot interview transcript analysed by the method or process of meaning condensation

Table 4.2: AN EXAMPLE OF PILOT INTERVIEW/ANALYSIS

***The interview analysis by the process  
of meaning condensation***

I: (Q 7). What are or what were these  
Quality Assurance Processes  
designed to achieve in the CEO and  
in the school?

The Natural Unit

R: Well Contract Renewal was designed for a  
very specific purpose. When a Principal is  
appointed to a school, when an AP is  
appointed to a school, when anyone within  
the organisation at a senior level is appointed  
they are appointed for a particular time. At  
the end of that time their contract  
renewal process happens and that can look  
different for different parts of the  
organisation. But essentially some colleagues  
would come in and interview a range of  
people and get some sort of a feel for how  
that particular person was doing  
the job.

At the end of that time, if it's satisfactory  
obviously the contract is renewed. There also  
have to be other ways of monitoring how  
well a job is being done and coming in at the  
end of 4 years to do some sort of a contract  
renewal process is obviously not  
developmental. It is more summative than  
formative.

So Triple PR was the process that was  
designed to be more formative and  
developmental and PPPR and the results of it  
inform the Contract Renewal because it is  
during PPPR that the colleague sits down  
with their mentor (who ever it might be) in  
the case of a principal it will be the school  
consultant, in the case of someone working in  
the office, it is a colleague. And you sit down  
and work out what your goals and your action  
plan are going to be. And then, of course,  
how well they are implemented informs the  
outcomes from the contract renewal. School

The central idea/meaning

*Purposes of the processes*

1. *Contract Renewal (CR) was designed for  
the purposes of monitoring, assessing  
and renewal of the appointments of  
senior staff of schools such as the  
principal, assistant principal and others  
for the specified period of time.*
2. *The PPPR is that developmental and  
formative aspect of the Quality  
Assurance Processes that provides the  
bases for the Contract Renewal process.*

Review and Development is also monitored in the schools by the consultant and the strategic plan and the particular goals from that are written into the Principal's Triple PR because it is the Principal's job to ensure the implementation of the outcomes from school review and development. It is the consultant's job to ensure that the Principal does comply.

I: (Q 8). *What are some of the positive outcomes you have observed in the schools or in the CEO since the implementation of these Processes?*

R I think since the processes have been designed and have been linked I think schools have come to an understanding that accountability is part of their brief and I think it has made accountability easier for them to come to terms with. I think initially the notion of accountability was quite scary for some teachers and some principals. I actually asked some principals this question myself a little while ago and they told me that School Review and Development and the entire processes generally (the quality assurance processes) gave them the structure to move forward with their school community. It gave them the time to reflect and discern, and it helped to create the plan to make the future implementation happen. So I think the schools generally have a pretty positive view of the outcomes from the Schools Review and Development and the other quality assurance processes. I think a lot depends on the culture of the school and the leadership shown by the principal. But generally I would say that most people view it quite positively. I think the processes together have been a very generative step forward for school communities.

3. *School Review and Development (SRD) has particular goals. These goals are written into the principals' PPPR. It is the job of the principal to ensure the implementation of the outcomes derived from the SRD process.*

#### Outcomes of the processes

1. *The processes are implemented and linked to one another. These have assisted schools to understand better the notion of accountability. Before the implementation of these processes, the notion of accountability used to scare Principals and teachers. This is a positive outcome of the processes for the school communities.*
- 2 *Leadership and the culture of the school are identified as the big factor influencing the positive outcomes.*

The level of awareness or perception was measured in terms of the key words or terms relating to the Quality Assurance Processes, and which the respondents either specifically named or implied in their responses.

Such terms include:

*quality, quality assurance*  
*ensuring quality*  
*maintenance of standard*  
*accountability & development*  
*professional development of staff*  
*involvement of the stakeholders*  
*ownership of the process*

For example, the respondent stated:

*... the process that was designed to be more formative and developmental and PPPR and the results of it inform the Contract Renewal.*

Here the respondent demonstrates a level of awareness of the purpose for which the processes were designed by actually using the terms “*formative and developmental*” which are used in the official documents by the CEO (CEO, Sydney 1995, 1996).

In another instance, a respondent stated thus:

*... I think it involves staff in a lot of these areas with the processes, not just the Principal or executive.*

Here the *involvement* of all stakeholders/key players is expressed.

It was not possible to transcribe all six pilot interviews and therefore, analyse them, due to some technical error in the recording. Nevertheless, from the on-the-spot experience of the interviews, the analysis of the useable transcripts and from the notes made by the Researcher, it was still possible to assess the awareness of the respondents. There was evident from the above that (with some modifications) both the interview schedule and

the method employed in the Pilot Study were capable of providing data source for the present research project with some promising results.

#### 4.8. Evaluation of the Pilot Study

##### The interview schedule

From the experience of the pilot study it was clear that to have a schedule for the open-ended questions at the interviews helped to keep the focus of the interviews during the session. The schedule also served as a prompt not only for the interviewees but also the interviewer. The first question in the pilot interview was:

*How aware are you of the quality assurance processes of the CEO, Sydney?*

It was found that such a question did not give the respondents ample opportunities to say much and did not allow them to disclose their background understanding about the quality assurance processes or programs. It was decided, therefore, that a first question be a more general one. Thus the first question was modified to read as:

*What do you understand by the term quality assurance?*

The expectation here was that the respondents would be able demonstrate at least a minimum understanding of the term. Such a background and general understanding would place the respondents in a better position to be able to understand and explain how the term is particularly applied in the CEO, Sydney. The second question therefore, was:

*What do you understand by the term Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney?*

This question was designed to allow the respondents to demonstrate their knowledge and awareness of the existence of the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, in particular, as distinct from the general notion of the term.

Further, some modifications were made in the designing of the questions, and these were then put into two different categories namely, Category One- Respondents from the CEO;

Category Two- Respondents from the school system. Consequently, the analysis of the main study was structured to match the two categories. It was found that categorisation would make it possible for the analysis process to bring out the contrasting perceptions and understanding of the various respondents inherent in their responses.

### *Selection of the respondents*

As stated earlier, it became feasible that the respondents could better be considered under two categories since they were to come from two different areas of the target population. The first category comprised the respondents from the CEO and these were largely selected from the Human Resources Department where most of the planning and execution of the major aspects or components of the quality assurance processes such as the PPPR, SRD, are managed and implemented (Guide to Educational Services, CEO, 1993, 1996, 1997).

The second category of respondents was school-based. Although some of the pilot interviews were not useable, it was possible to discover some trends which indicated that some of the teachers selected for the pilot interviews should not have been selected to participate in the study due to some limitations. It was discovered that at the time of this study, not all the Catholic schools, and therefore, not all the teachers in Sydney Archdiocese, had yet been involved in the new package of the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney. It was not sufficient to be an employee of the Catholic education system and then qualify to participate in this present project. Only those who had some direct involvement in the quality assurance processes of the CEO, Sydney could be considered as qualified to participate.

It was then necessary for the researcher to make sure that those selected for the Main Study interviews came from those schools that had implemented or were implementing parts or all the components of the quality assurance processes. With the assistance of the Regional Directors as contact persons, it was possible to identify and then select two such



schools from each of the three regions in Sydney- comprising one primary school and one secondary school, bringing the total number of schools selected for this study to six.

#### *Technique and the mechanics of interviewing*

It was discovered that a number of issues were to be addressed in the techniques and mechanics of the pilot interviews. As the interviews were audio-taped, some of them could not be heard properly due to some background noise from either the children playing outside, the telephone ringing or an airplane flying over the school property area. During the Main study, efforts were made to avoid noisy environment or surroundings when the interviews were in progress.

Some of the interviews were, admittedly, rushed due to pressure of time on the part of the respondents who were anxious to attend to other appointments. This situation certainly would influence the reliability of the responses. Much effort was made in the main study to schedule interviews when it was most convenient for the respondents.

#### *Validity and Reliability*

Validity in research is the extent to which a measurement procedure gives the correct answer or to which a finding is interpreted in a correct ways. Reliability refers to the extent to which the measurement procedure yields the same answer, even when such a procedure is used by different researchers. Concerning internal validity and reliability of the interviews data, the present researcher was aware of the inherent biases due to the various background and nature of the respondents as well as the interviewer. It was true that some of the respondents would be in sympathy with the very Catholic Education system. And so, even they see a problem or they do not entirely agree with what is going on in the particular system or set-up, they may still be in favour of it. Others would desire to portray themselves in a favourable light even if only in the eyes of a visitor or

researcher (Minichiello *et al.*, 1995). For example, in one of the pilot interviews, the respondent, a school principal stated: “*we just have to accept it, if we must keep our job.*”

A statement such as this, points to the fact that the respondent may not be entirely free and open to disclose or discuss everything for fear that it might affect his or her job position. A respondent who is under such situation or feeling is likely to exercise some restraints, and tend to offer half-hearted or ‘coded’ answers to the questions put to him or her at the interviews.

Another issue of interest and importance was the *outsider-insider* situation. As the present researcher was an outsider to the Catholic Education system, there was cause for concern about the implications of the research and particular visits to the schools or the education offices. While this concern was not expressed verbally, it could be observable in some body language such as the nodding of the head, manifested in the respondents. To help minimise such possible source of bias or invalidity in the study, effort was made to relax the respondents at the beginning of each interview by restating the purposes of the study, the need for commitment to confidentiality and the fact that the respondents were free not to continue with the interview at any time.

Status and position on the parts of both the respondents and the researcher were also identified in the pilot study as possible source of bias and, therefore, could influence the validity and reliability of the interview responses. In fact, one particular interview was granted simply because the present writer is “*a Catholic priest*”, as the respondent put it. Such an attitude or remark had the potential to create a gap or distance between the researcher and the participants, and could impact on the validity and reliability of the data. To diminish or reduce the possibility, it was decided that personal titles such as Mr., Dr., Rev., etc, were not used. Discussions were addressed and directed to each other on first name bases only. This decision was adopted and applied in the Main Study.

#### **4.9 The result of the Pilot Study**

Among the aims of the pilot study was to provide an opportunity for assessing the quality of instruments (both the human and material) involved in the interview project. The evaluation of the pilot study has shown that it was possible to undertake the study of the Nature, Outcomes and Effectiveness of the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney and achieve useful and, probably, significant responses to the research questions. However, some modifications for the interview schedule were necessary as few of the questions needed to be either streamlined or eliminated for better understanding before the final schedule was incorporated into the Main Study schedule.

Since the Pilot Study was for the purposes of testing the suitability of the instruments, assessing the methodology and design for this project as well as assessing the interviewing technique, it was necessary to carry out any more detailed data analysis at this level. That will be better addressed in the Main Study which follows in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### MAIN STUDY

#### 5.1 Introduction

In the previous Chapter, the Pilot Study showed that, with modifications, the design and methodological procedures proposed and adopted for this study were potentially capable of producing meaningful results. The next two chapters will report on the results of the Main Study project. In doing this, it was considered appropriate to revisit some of the issues of methodology so as to indicate what modifications have been made in the procedures as well as show how the modified version(s) have been applied to the study.

In this present Chapter, the Main Study report is presented in three sections. Section One briefly sums up the techniques and procedures employed in the data collection method for the study. Section Two restates the analytical procedures employed in the project, and presents the analysis of some selected interviews to ascertain how the procedures were actually used in the Main Study. Section Three contains an example of the comparison of the perceptions of the two categories of respondents about the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney.

## **SECTION ONE: SUMMING UP THE TECHNIQUES AND PROCEDURES USED FOR DATA COLLECTION IN THE MAIN STUDY**

### **5. 2. Interview Schedule for the Main Study**

Interview was the main source of data collection for this project. The interview schedule used at the Main Study was the modified form of the Pilot Study interview schedule. The interview schedule for the Main Study contained 19 questions altogether and this was used as a guide for both the writer and the participants during the interviews sessions.

The same interview schedule was used for all participants except in the case of the interview with the Executive Director of Schools where some of the questions were worded differently. This slight deviation was designed to make it possible to obtain and view the data for the project from a different angle. Marshall and Rossman (1989) had advised and recommended that the researcher may deviate from the research proposal if an exciting and significant focus emerges from the early data collection. They noted that, “the strength of the qualitative (research) approach is this very flexibility which allows, and even encourages exploration, discovery and creativity” (p. 110).

A copy of the Main Study interviews schedule is provided as an **Appendix F**.

### **5. 3. Choice of Participants for the Main Study**

Earlier in this work it had been seen that the type of data required as well as the knowledge of the person(s) possessing such data, would influence the choice of participants to the project (Cohen & Manion, 1994). Although the CEO, Sydney had introduced the Quality Assurance Processes to its schools and administrative systems for a number of years now (CEO, 1990), some of the Catholic systemic schools were yet to fully implement the processes at the time of this study. This is because on the one hand, it was part of the organisational plan not to involve all of the systemic schools in the

implementation of the Processes at the same time without first piloting with a few. On the other hand, even those schools that opted to be among the early (Pilot) group still had the option to implement either the SRD together with the Educational Audit, or one without the other. It was not, therefore, surprising to find that many of the teachers were not yet adequately aware of all the processes and the intricacies of their implementation. Informed by this fact, plus the experience gained during the conduct of the Pilot Study presented in Chapter Four, necessary care was taken in the choice of participants for the Main Study. The researcher was aware and conscious of the fact that any indiscriminate choice of participants had the potential to adversely affect the quality of interview responses, and consequently affect the validity and reliability of the entire study.

There are other issues such as the gender (male or female) of the participants, religious affiliation, marital status, and so on, that can also influence the choice of participants in a study such as this. These details in personal issues were not matters for serious considerations since the present study was not concerned with persons or personal matters, rather with only organisational matters. The study was interested in the nature, outcomes and effectiveness of the processes in those schools that had been actively involved in the implementation. Nevertheless, the researcher was cognisant of the fact that, in studies such as this, the backgrounds and/or past experiences of participants or respondents are among the factors that could influence the validity and reliability of the final data collected. Indeed, in this study past experience was one of the criteria for selecting participants.

Those selected to participate in the Main Study, therefore, came from those schools that were identified as having been involved in the implementation of the processes. In like manner, participants selected from the CEO were men and women with some direct involvement in the implementation of the Quality Assurance Processes. By virtue of their involvement, such specially selected participants were expected to be conversant with the topic, articulate at their responses and be able to make meaningful contributions to the subject being studied.

Those finally selected to participate in the Main Study were identified and categorised as follows:

Category One: Respondents from the CEO;

Category Two: Respondents from the schools system;

Respondents from Category One were identified and these included:

The Executive Director of schools in the Archdiocese of Sydney.

Some selected senior staff members in the Central Office.

The Regional Directors from each of the three Regional Offices in the Archdiocese.

Consultants selected across the three regions in the Archdiocese.

All of these were collectively identified by the code “CEO”, simply understood to stand for the Respondents from Category One- the CEO.

Respondents from Category Two were also identified and they included:

The Principals of the six selected schools;

The Assistant Principals of the six selected schools;

The Religious Education Coordinator of the six selected schools;

Six other nominated teachers from the selected schools.

All of these would be collectively identified by the code “SCH”, simply understood to stand for the Respondents from Category Two- SCH

A formal letter of invitation was issued to those so selected, and all, except one Regional Director who was ill, accepted the invitation and expressed their willingness to participate in the Study. This was followed up with phone calls to personally arrange and confirm time, date and places of meeting for the interviews. The participants were allowed the freedom to choose the date and time convenient to them for the interviews.

#### **5. 4. Conducting the Main Study Interviews**

Almost all the interviews for this Main Study were conducted during the months of November and December 1996. The aim was to complete them before that year's Christmas holidays would start. However, this was not exactly the case as interviews with two of the key staff members of the CEO could not take place until the first two weeks of January 1997. These two interviews were rescheduled a number of times until it was convenient for those respondents and the researcher.

At the start of every session the interview schedule was always provided to guide both the respondents and the interviewer in the conduct of the interviews. Informed by the experiences gained during the Pilot Study exercise, it was decided that at each interview, the researcher would formally introduce and explain to the respondents, the topic, the purpose and the aim of the study. These techniques were adopted to relax the respondents, instil confidence and clear any doubts about the importance of the project.

As earlier discussed in the Design and Methodology section (Chapter 3) of this work, the venues for the interviews were deliberately chosen at the participants' various places of work or offices, not only for convenience but also to capture the lived-world or life experience of each participant. By this design the respondents felt at home and convenient to talk as freely as possible. However, an exception to this was made in the case of one participant who was due to travel overseas shortly. The only time and date available and convenient to interview that particular respondent was a Saturday morning - outside school hours. This particular interview was then conducted not at the work place, but at the home of the respondent. That interview was actually marked with calm and quiet in a private room without any distractions.



### 5. 5. Tape Recording of the Main Study Interviews

Thompson (1996) has described the function of tape-recorder as a mediating factor in research interviews. Drawing on Douglas (1985), Thompson acknowledges that the technology of tape-recording has both advantages and disadvantages.

The recorder is both a re-assurance of the seriousness of your pursuit and a brutal technological reminder of human separateness that undermines the intimate communion you are trying to create. The recorder is a double-edged reminder and is thus quite problematic. But it is such a powerful weapon in the fight for truth that it must be used in all situations where it is allowed.

(cited in Thompson, 1996, p. 4)

The above quote says it all about the 'enabling' and 'disabling' characters of a tape-recorder and tape-recording in research interviews. While it is widely acknowledged that tape-recording at interview enhances concentration and responsiveness, the device could also be a problem depending on when and how it is applied. Hence, in this study, every care was taken to ensure that this or any other equipment or device, did not constitute a problem.

All the respondents readily granted approval for the use of the tape, and so all the interviews were audio-taped. The present writer attributes this firstly to the maturity and experience of the respondents. Some of them must have been involved in one form of interviewing or the other where tape recorder had been used. Occasionally, while the present writer would be explaining the conditions or rules for the use of the tape, some of the respondents actually made such remarks as: "*we are well familiar with these things now*", referring to their familiarity in the use of tape-recorders in various and previous situations.

A second and more important reason for their willingness to permit the use of the tape-recorder could be explained by the efficient and effective manner in which the interviewer introduced and explained the needs and purposes of the techniques and

technology. By means of both the **Informed/Consent Letter** (Appendix E) and the 'door step' introduction, it was easier to convince the respondents of the necessity of tape-recorder for the success of the interviews as well as the retention and security of the data.

The use of tape-recorder was openly negotiated and the permission was willingly offered. Thompson (1996) made the point when he explained that "rather than concealing it (the tape-recorder), it is good to make sure that it is readily accessible to all participants as . . . this is more honest, and evidence of the non-threatening and positive element of the recording process" (p. 4). In this way, respondents of any interviews are allowed the freedom to willingly permit or disallow the use of the tape-recorder.

In this present study, the presence of the tape recorder did not appear to present any threat to the respondents. Instead of inhibiting communication or threatening the respondents, the use seemed to promote greater rapport and enhance openness at the interview sessions.

On the other hand, Minichiello *et al.* (1995) had pointed out that chances are there, however, that some respondents, seeing a tape-recorder, could become anxious or over-excited to have their voices recorded on the tape-recorder. In that case, they could be more interested in portraying themselves in favourable light before the researcher, than in the answers they should offer. The present researcher was careful not to allow such a situation develop as that could eventually be a source of bias which affect the validity and reliability of the data.

## **5. 6. Transcription of the Main Study Interviews**

Good quality tapes were used for the recording and the recordings turned out good and audible enough for easy transcription. As proposed in the research design, a verbatim transcription of the interviews was carried out. A verbatim transcription implied that the initial transcript was not edited. Rather, it included repetitive sentences, partial

formulations and even some significant pauses as recorded. An example of ‘verbatim’ interviews transcript is presented as an **Appendix G-1**.

While the quality of the recording was good, the researcher experienced some minor difficulties in understanding some of the Australian accent on the tape especially when it was a rather extraordinarily fast-spoken respondent. To overcome such difficulties, an external and experienced person was employed to help in the transcription. In the end, a single version of the transcript was produced by the researcher and used as a data source in this study.

The interview transcripts were also forwarded to individual respondents who were requested to read through, make any correction/additions and then offer approval for the data to be used for the study only. An approval letter or form was sent along with the transcripts and the respondents were required to sign and return to the researcher within a stipulated period. Those respondents who did not return the forms or react in any way to the request for the approval within a stipulated period were deemed to have offered their consent in their silence. Samples of the letter of request and the Approval Form are shown as an **Appendix G-2**.

Altogether the approval forms were signed and returned by 30 out of 35 respondents, and only one respondent did not want the data to be used for the purposes of the study. As no specific reason was offered for the objection, it was taken for granted that the respondent was simply exercising the right not to be part of the project. Such a right was allowed every participant in the **Informed/Consent Letter** referred to earlier. The data from the affected interview transcript were not used in this present project.

The interview transcripts were assigned identification ‘tags’ such as ‘CEO/01 and SCH/01’ as they were being assembled. This measure was adopted to avoid the use of personal names, and so protect the privacy of individual respondents and enhance confidentiality. Each of the Main Study interview transcripts are identified and referred to

by such tags throughout this writing.

The next section explains the analytical processes for this study and presents the analysis of some representative interviews.

## **SECTION TWO: ANALYTICAL PROCEDURES AND THE ANALYSIS OF SOME SELECTED INTERVIEWS**

Early in this project, the statement of the problem was expressed both in the title and in the research questions. It was decided that structured interviews be used as the main method and source of data collection for this project. The questions on the interview schedule were therefore, designed for the purposes of eliciting information from respondents about the Nature, Outcomes and the Effectiveness of the implementation of the entire Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney.

The problem was further summarised into the following two questions to which the writer set out to find answer(s):

1. What are the perceptions of some significant stakeholders in the Catholic education system about the Nature, Outcomes and Effectiveness of the implementation of the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney?
2. What factors are assisting and/or hindering the effectiveness of the implementation of these processes both in the schools and the CEO levels?

### **5.7 The Analytical Procedures for this Study**

The process of Meaning Condensation was the method adopted for the analysis of the interviews which would provide answer(s) to the above questions. This process described by Kvale (1996) involves the reduction of a large (interview) transcript into briefer and more succinct formulations through five steps of analysis namely:

- |        |  |
|--------|--|
| Step 1 | Reading the whole interview through to get a sense of the whole; |
|--------|--|

- Step 2            Determining the natural meaning units as expressed by the subject;
- Step 3            Stating as simply as possible the themes that dominate that natural meaning unit of the subject's answer;
- Step 4            Interrogating the meaning units in terms of the specific purpose of the study; and
- Step 5            Tying up together all the essential themes into a descriptive statement (Kvale, 1996, p. 194).

An example of the use of this method was found applied in an interview study on learning by Giorgi (1975) reported in Kvale (1996, pp. 27-28). In that study, the interview transcripts were analysed through the process of Meaning Condensation. The transcripts were presented in their 'natural unit' in the left-hand column, with the derived central meanings written beside in the right-hand column (p. 195). Such a style of presentation provides for a synoptic reading and viewing of both the natural units of the transcripts and the derived central meanings. This procedure was adopted for the Pilot Study of this present project with considerable success (see Chapter Four), and was decided to use for the analysis of the Main Study.

However, the interviews conducted for the Main Study project had resulted in such a large volume of transcripts that it would become too cumbersome, and would take up too much space if the analysis of each interview were to be presented in exactly the form shown in the Pilot Study example in Figure 4.1 (see Chapter Four, pp. 109-111). For practical reasons, therefore, it was decided that the design and procedures be modified to make it manageable for the large volume of material for the present study, but without losing any essential parts. Accordingly, although the interviews were analysed in the same process as piloted in Figure 4.1, it was not considered necessary to re-state all the *natural units* and the *interpretations* page-by-page in the this Main Study. In the modified form, therefore, the five steps in the *meaning condensation procedure* were reduced to the following four steps:

- Step 1. Reading the whole text for a sense of the whole;
- Step 2. Determining the natural meaning units as expressed by the respondent;
- Step 3. Interpreting and tying up together the essential themes into descriptive statements; and
- Step 4. Presenting the essential ideas as interpretations and themes in terms of the specific purposes of the present study.

Thus, in this present study the writer 'read each interview text for the sense of the whole', 'determined the natural meaning units expressed by the respondents', and then 'presented the essential ideas' in the interrogated and interpreted form as they are related to the specific purpose of this present study.

So, at the analysis, only those relevant points derived from the interview responses and assessed by the writer as both meaningful and relating to the specific purpose of the present study were presented.

Smith (1996) rightly pointed out that in any form of assessment the "assessor simply looks to see if the participant can do the things specified in a set of competency standards" (p. 196). In this present project, therefore, to enhance the assessment of the level of awareness of the individual respondents, certain criteria needed to be developed and followed. To this end, significant key words or terms related to the Nature, Outcomes and Effectiveness of the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney, were identified (CEO, 1990; 1992; 1993; 1994; 1995; 1996; 1997) and put together to form these criteria.

Table 5.1 shows the collection of these key words or terms under the headings of the research variables, namely: (A) the Nature of the Processes, (B) the Outcomes of the Processes, and (C) the Effectiveness of the implementation of the Processes.

**Table 5.1:** Key Words and Terms used in Relation to Naming/Describing Issues in the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney.

A: NATURE OF THE PROCESSES	B: OUTCOMES OF THE PROCESSES	C: EFFECTIVENESS OF IMPLEMENTATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Quality Assurance Process (CEO, 1995; Internet, 1997)</li> <li>* PPPR Process (CEO, 1994; 1996)</li> <li>* SRD Process (CEO, 1994. pp. 1-6)</li> <li>- Ed. Audit Process (CEO, 1994 pp. 9-15; CEO, ED/174**, p. 3)</li> <li>- Contract Renewal Process (CEO (ED/174**), 1993, p. 3)</li> <li>- Strategic Management Plan (CEO, 1995. p. 23; 1996. p.16)</li> <li>- Accountability Process (CEO, 1994. p. 22)</li> <li>- Developmental Process (CEO, 1995)</li> <li>- Appraisal Process (CEO, 1990)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Ensuring quality (CEO, 1995)</li> <li>* Accountability (CEO, 1994. p. 22)</li> <li>* Development (CEO, 1995)</li> <li>- Vision statement (CEO, 1990. p. 25; 1995. p.15)</li> <li>- Mission statement (CEO, 1995. p. 16)</li> <li>- Culture of Review (CEO, 1994.p. 1)</li> <li>- Community involvement (CEO, 1990. p. 28)</li> <li>- Ownership of Process (CEO, 1994.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Resources (CEO, 1994. p.21)</li> <li>* Effective Leadership (CEO, 1996. pp. 6, 20)</li> <li>* Monitoring/Supervision (CEO, 1996. p. 20)</li> <li>- System Support (CEO, 1995)</li> <li>- Affirmation of Persons (CEO, 1990; 1995,CEO ED/174)</li> <li>- Feedback and Information Processes (CEO, 1994.)</li> <li>- Ownership of Process (CEO, 1994.)</li> <li>- Linking the Processes (CEO, 1994. p. 5; CEO, 1992-93, ED/138; **ED/174)</li> </ul>

\*\* Circular Letters by the Executive Director of Schools to Systemic School Principals in 1992 and 1993.

Some of the key words or terms may appear in more than one column in the table. In such a case, it means that the key words or terms are used to refer to more than one thing and in more than one circumstance. For example, 'Accountability' and 'Development' are found in the first column (about the Nature of the Processes) and are also found in the second column (about the Outcomes of the Processes). This means that, on the one hand, the term *accountability* is a word used to describe the nature of Quality Assurance Processes, and on the other hand, *accountability* is also used to describe the outcome of the implementation of the Processes. Similarly, the Processes can be described as

*developmental* in nature, and also the results or outcome of the implementation, can be described as having a *developmental* effect.

In like manner, the term '*Ownership of the Process*' appearing in both the Outcomes and the Effectiveness columns means that, on the one hand, *taking ownership of the Processes* by the various stakeholders is an outcome of the implementation of the Processes. On the other hand, it is when the various stakeholders assume ownership of the Processes that the implementation could be enhanced. In this regard, therefore, the term '*ownership of the Processes*' becomes a *factor that can assist or hinder* the effectiveness of the implementation of the Processes.

The respondents showed their awareness of the Nature, Outcomes and Effectiveness of the implementation of the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney by naming and describing them (the Processes) using these or similar terms shown in Table 5.1 above. By the process of 'meaning condensation' any unclear or indirect reference to these terms or key words were interpreted by the present researcher to bring out the essential meaning and the context in which they were used. Thus, the respondents were assessed as to their level of awareness, not only by what they said, but also how relevant to the subject of study was what they said as demonstrated by their use of some or all of the key words and terms or equivalents, to express themselves.

## **5.8 The Treatment of the Interview Transcripts and Data Management**

Before carrying out the analysis, it was considered necessary to explain how the entire interview transcripts for this present project were treated during the analysis, what criteria were used to assess the level of awareness and quality of the responses, and how the reports were presented.

When carrying out the analysis the researcher read through the transcripts underlining the key words or terms or the essential ideas expressed in the interview by the respondents.



As would be expected, it was not always that the respondents used the key words or terms exactly in the forms they appear in the table. In the process of the analysis, the different statements made by the respondents were interpreted or condensed into meaningful terms or essential ideas that were deemed related to the specific purpose of the study. A few examples are offered below to aid further clarification.

1. Example of the handling or treatment of *direct* statement or quote was given thus:

*The interviewer asked:*

What are some the outcomes you have observed since the implementation of these Processes?

*The respondent answered:*

The end result of the processes is accountability and development (CEO/01).

This response quoted here did not require any further interpretation for the meaning or the essential idea expressed therein to be understood. This was taken as a direct statement or response that directly named the underlined terms - accountability and development as the outcomes of the Processes.

2. Example of the handling or treatment *indirect* statement and quote was given thus:

Where the exact words or terms were not used, the sentences that expressed the essential ideas were underlined within the transcripts. Then, using the process of Meaning Condensation, these were interpreted or paraphrased to bring out the expressed meaning.

For instance:

*The interviewer asked:*

What are some the outcomes you have observed since the implementation of these Processes?

*A respondent provided the following answer:*

I think the first thing is that it makes you reflect on what you are

doing. . . . There is a continual process of evaluating the CEO Processes...You get a dialogue going on as well as evaluation. So the whole organisation has very high commitment to improving and enhancing performance (CEO/012).

Here the quote needed to be paraphrased and interpreted to bring out the essential meaning. Using the process of *meaning condensation*, the underlined words or phrases which expressed the essential ideas in the response were paraphrased and then interpreted by the writer to signify a reference to the terms '*Culture of Review*' and '*Ensuring Quality*' as parts of the outcomes from the implementation of the Quality Assurance Processes. Specifically, the expressions, 'Reflect' and 'continual process of evaluation' were interpreted to refer to a '*Culture of Review*', while the expression 'commitment to improving and enhancing performance' was interpreted to refer to the idea of '*ensuring quality*' in the Processes (CEO, 1995; see also Table 5.1).

This way of treating the transcripts was followed throughout the analysis of the entire interviews. In this way it was then possible for the writer to recognise when and where a particular respondent made reference to any of the key words or terms in their responses.

The next section presents a model (an example) of the score sheets designed to show how each respondent used the key words or terms to express themselves.

### **5.9 Method of Scoring and Recording the Key Words and Terms.**

The purpose of this section is to provide an example of how the key words or terms were identified and scored against each respondent. Some interviews were selected from both categories of respondents as representative interviews to demonstrate the method of scoring the respondents' statements which expressed their awareness of the Processes.

Table 5.2 below was designed to represent a typical example of the score-sheet in which the sign of awareness and perceptions of the respondent were recorded as derived from

the interviews transcripts being analysed. When a respondent used the key words or terms to name or describe the nature, outcomes and factors assisting or hindering the effective implementation of the Quality Assurance Processes a tick was given on the prepared score-sheet.

**Table 5.2:** An Example of the Score-sheet Showing the Use of the Key Words or Terms to assess the Level of Awareness of a sample of Respondents about the Quality Assurance Processes.

KEY WORDS AND TERMS	CATEGORY ONE:- CEO RESPONDENTS				CATEGORY TWO:- SCH RESPONDENTS			
A: NATURE	01	02	03	04	025	026	027	028
Quality Assurance Processes (Meaning)	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
PPPR Process	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
SRD Process	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ed. Audit Process	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Contract Renewal Process	✓	✓		✓				
Strategic Management Plan	✓	✓	✓	✓				
Accountability Process	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Developmental Process	✓	✓	✓					✓
B: OUTCOMES								
Accountability	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓
Development	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓
Ensuring quality	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Mission Statement	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	
Vision Statement	✓	✓	✓					
Culture of Review	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Confidence at Work			✓					
Community involvement	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
C: EFFECTIVENESS								
Resources	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓
Ownership of Processes		✓	✓					
Effective Leadership	✓	✓✓	✓	✓				
Feedback and Information	✓					✓		
Monitoring/Supervision	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓
System Support	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	
Affirming People		✓		✓	✓			
Linking the Processes			✓					

A single tick (✓) in the Table indicates that the term or key word was referred to once while double ticks (✓✓) indicate that the respondent(s) had made references to the words or terms twice or more in the interview transcript. The double ticks did not result in any statistical significance. It was only a matter of emphasis.

The next section describes the criteria used to assess the level of awareness of the respondents about the Processes as well as the criteria for assessing the quality of interview responses.

#### **5.10 Criteria for Assessing the Level of Awareness:**

The level of awareness of the Processes were assessed as: *very high; high; low; and very low*.

The criteria for these judgements are explained as follows:

*Very high:* The respondent was able to:

1. – name and describe the main components of the Quality Assurance Processes namely, PPPR, SRD, Ed. Audit, and Contract Renewal/Review Consultation;
2. – name and describe most of the outcomes of the Processes;
3. – name and describe most of the factors assisting or hindering the effectiveness of the implementation of the Processes; and
4. – offer an overall assessment of the Processes.

*High:* The respondent was able to:

1. – name or describe the most of the components of the Processes same as at above;
2. – name or describe many of items that constitute the outcomes of the Processes;

3. – name or describe many of the factors assisting or hindering the effective implementation of the Processes; and
4. - offer an overall assessment of the Processes.

Low: The respondent:

1. – named or described a few of the components of the Processes;
2. – named or described a few items about the outcomes of the Processes;
3. – named or described a few factors assisting or hindering the effective implementation of the Processes; and
4. - did not offer any assessment of the Processes.

Very low: In this case the respondents:

1. - named or described only one or two of the components of the Processes;
2. - did not name or describe what constitute the Outcomes of the Processes;
3. - did not name or describe the factors affecting the effectiveness of the implementation of the Processes; and
4. - did not offer any assessment of the Processes.

Thus a respondent's level of awareness of the Processes was assessed as being *very high*, *high*, *low*, or *very low*, depending on which of the above conditions they fulfilled.

Each respondent was asked to offer an overall assessment of the Processes and such assessment was reported as a separate heading in the analysis. Then at the end of each analysis the level of awareness of each respondent was assessed by the researcher which was also presented as a separate heading. All the above steps are shown in the analysis report that follows later.

### **5.11 Criteria for Assessing the Quality of Interview Responses**

The assessment of the quality of interview responses was partly dependent on the

assessment of the level of awareness, and vice versa. This was so because during the analysis to assess the level of awareness, it was possible to derive some sense or some feeling of the quality of responses at the same time. However, it was decided to treat these two issues separately and provide different criteria for judging the quality in order to enhance clarity. The quality of interview responses was therefore, assessed and described as: *good, ordinary, or poor* quality.

The criteria for these judgements are explained as follows:

*Good* if:

the responses were clearly expressed, meaningful and related to the topic of study.

*Ordinary* if:

the responses, though had meaning and related to the Processes, were not clearly expressed and needed interpretation to bring out the meaning.

*Poor* if:

the responses 'wandered away' from the main issues and were not much related to the Processes.

Thus, in each interview analysis the researcher was looking to see:- how aware each respondent was of the Nature, Outcomes and Effectiveness of the implementation of the Processes; what is the quality of the interview responses by those respondents based on the above criteria; and finally, how the individual respondents themselves assessed or judged the entire Quality Assurance Processes.

In the next section some representative interviews are analysed employing the procedures that have been described.

## **THE ANALYSIS OF SOME REPRESENTATIVE INTERVIEWS**

### **5.12 The purpose and design for this section**

The purpose of this section is to demonstrate how the level of awareness and the quality of interview responses were assessed during the analysis of the Main Study interviews. The aim is to capture the general perception of the respondents about the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney. Consequently, the analysis is presented in the form that it describes the Nature, Outcomes, and the Effectiveness of the implementation of these Processes. The analysis provides columns for an overall assessment of the Processes by each respondent. In the same way, there is a provision and design for the researcher to offer an assessment of the level of awareness of each individual respondent as well as determine the quality of interview responses offered by each respondent.

The report of this analysis will, therefore, be seen in the following order:

- A: Awareness of the Nature of the Processes by each respondent
- B: Awareness of the Outcomes of the Processes by each respondent
- C: Awareness of the Effectiveness of the Processes by each respondent
- D: Overall assessment of Processes by each respondent
- E: Assessment of Level of awareness of each respondent by the researcher
- F: Assessment of the quality of interview responses by the researcher

Four interview transcripts were selected from Category One –the CEO respondents, and four from Category Two –the SCH respondents for the purpose of this representative analysis. The selection, however, did not necessarily follow a numerical order. Rather, such interview transcripts were chosen to suit the purpose and aim of this present section. Accordingly, interview transcripts CEO/03, CEO/02, CEO/06 and CEO/012 were selected from Category One while interview transcripts SCH/018, SCH/014, SCH/015 and SCH/017 were selected from Category Two. Similarly, since the criteria set out in the

design above for the assessment of the level of awareness are in a descending order, the ensuing presentations naturally followed such descending order, namely: *very high*, *high*, *low*, and *very low*. This then, explains the order in which these set of interviews and the reports appear in the presentation and the summary tables provided for each set of four interview analysis.

### **5.13 Representative Interviews from the CEO.**

#### **Interview CEO/03**

*A: Nature of the Processes.*

The respondent here described Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO as “putting in place some strategies in order to provide or ensure the confidence that parents (for instance) need to have about the education of their children”. Quality for this respondent also means something that can be justified, something of which to be proud.

Further, the respondent named the different components of the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO to include:

the PPPR, the SRD,  
the Ed. Audit, and  
the Contract Renewal/Review Consultation

The respondent explained that the Quality Assurance Processes are a set of processes designed to engage people in developing shared understandings about the purposes, aims, goals and the strategies required to take them where they want to be. With regards to the Catholic Education Office (CEO) Sydney, the respondent noted that there was the Strategic Management Plan put in place under the title “*Towards 2005*”. This forms the framework for the different aspects of the Processes that the CEO Sydney has designed for the purposes of ensuring quality and keeping to the required standard in its education system.



It's about standards, it's about the teaching, teaching methods, teaching content, making sure that our Catholic children are being educated as well as children in other parts of the country or other education systems (CEO/03).

*B: Outcomes of the Processes.*

The Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, according to this respondent have assisted Principals to work with their staff on their own development, and to provide opportunities in a structured way for affirmation as well as for feedback which make people become more effective at their work. Since the activities and events are planned and structured into the system, people in the system know where they are going and what they are doing. The Processes give people (teachers) a sense of direction and a sense of belonging:

They have a sense of belonging to the whole school as an organisation, meeting the school's vision, mission, goals and priorities. As a result, there exist far greater cohesiveness, far greater purpose and goal setting and review, and further development plans for greater efficiency and effectiveness. . . (CEO/03).

By the process of meaning condensation, the first line of this quote was interpreted to refer to '*community involvement*' as an outcome of the Processes. However, without any further interpretation, it could be seen that the above quote names other outcomes of the Processes to include '*vision statement*', '*the mission statement*', '*culture of review*' and '*development*', represented by the underlined words or phrases.

*C: Effectiveness of the Implementation of the Processes.*

The respondent named a number of factors that were assisting the effectiveness of the implementation of the Processes. These included: *the total commitment of the Executive Director, the commitment of the Regional Directors and Consultants*; the '*resources*' made available by the CEO to support the implementation of the Processes; '*good and effective leadership*' from the Principals; and *the spreading of information* or what some

refer to as “good press”.

The respondent further stated thus:

We have about 151 Principals. Obviously some are excellent at leadership, some are very good, some are good some are satisfactory, and it could be that a very small minority are not all that good. . . But there wouldn't be very many who wouldn't actively embrace the Quality Assurance Processes because they see the value in them. (CEO/03).

On the other hand the attitudes to leadership and activities of some Principals constituted factors that were hindering the effectiveness of the Processes. This respondent noted that some Principals were over-committed or overdoing the implementation.

Rather than preparing the school according to the guidelines, some Principals . . . over engaged their staff in putting up their documentations and practices way beyond the minimum requirement for Registration and Accreditation . . . and that under the disguise of Educational Audit. (CEO/03).

#### *D: Overall Assessment of the Processes by the respondent*

Overall, the respondent thought that the entire Quality Assurance Processes were recommended. Every aspect of the Processes was approved of by this respondent except that there should be some streamlining of the Ed. Audit process in particular.

I believe we've got the best set of Quality Assurance Processes in the world, and I really do believe that. I don't say that lightly. . . . I don't see evidence from any other school system that I've looked at where there has been such success in sharpening curriculum, sharpening reflective practice and in changing school culture as ours (CEO/03).

#### *E: Assessment of the level of awareness by the Researcher*

The respondent was able to name/describe all the components of the Processes and demonstrated a high level of awareness about the Nature, outcomes and Effectiveness of

the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney. This interview was therefore, an example of the “*very high*” level of awareness.

*F: Assessment of the quality of interview responses*

The responses were given in clear and appropriate terms relating to the Nature, Outcomes and Effectiveness of the Processes. They were therefore, assessed and rated as “Good” quality of responses following the set criteria.

**Interview CEO/01**

*A: Nature of the Processes.*

The respondent at this interview described Quality Assurance in general as a ‘process put in place to monitor the quality of products and services in any organisation’. The respondent was also able to name the different components of the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO to include:

the School Review and Development (SRD);  
the Educational Audit (Ed. Audit);  
the Personnel Performance Planning and Review (PPPR);  
the Contract Renewal/Review Consultation.

By naming the main components of the Processes, it was evident that this respondent was fully aware of the nature of the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO. As it stands, this answer was sufficient and acceptable for section “A” (Nature) of the interview schedule. However, the respondent is expected to further demonstrate or confirm his or her awareness of the Processes providing answers to the schedule in “B” (Outcomes) and “C” (Effectiveness) in order to be possible to assess their perceptions.

*B: Outcomes of the Processes.*

Under *Outcomes*, the respondent described the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO,

as those processes put in place to help the schools monitor themselves and thereby, be accountable to the Church, the Government, the parents and the wider community for the quality of what they are doing.

The respondent stated:

The Processes in Sydney are those that have been designed and adopted by the system of schools in general, to put into place as an outside assessment of the quality of service that's being offered. But essentially those processes are built on what the school does in monitoring itself and being accountable... (CEO/01).

This quote was found to contain a number of essential ideas that described some of the Outcomes of the Processes. Applying the process of meaning condensation, the underlined terms or phrases were interpreted thus:-

assessment of the quality of service: i.e. *Ensuring quality*;

built on what the school does: refers to the *Vision of the school*;

monitoring itself: refers to a *Culture of Review*;

and being accountable: refers to *Accountability* as an outcome.

Further, the respondent noted that these Processes provide for a specific development plan. The specific development plan enables the school communities to look more closely at their work and the quality of the services they provide to the public. The respondent said:

I think a positive outcome for the schools is that they now have a development plan that is made by the community, owned by the community and they can see how they move step by step ahead.  
(CEO/01).

In another statement the respondent said:

In the schools they are designed for establishing a development plan, for ownership within the school community of that plan. In the CEO, they are designed to access CEO personnel significantly into the life of the school and to apply the processes  
(CEO/01).

The essential ideas expressed in the above are that the school community has in place, a plan of action to follow; the plan is produced by the entire school community; and the school community actually takes responsibility (ownership) of the plan of action so produced. The interpretation or *condensed meaning* here is that there is “Community involvement” in what comes out of the Processes as part of the measures to ensure quality. Again, in doing this, the result, sometimes in form of document, called “the mission statement”, could be published for the school concerned.

*C: Effectiveness of the Implementation of the Processes.*

On the one hand, good leadership team was named by this respondent as the factor assisting the effectiveness of the implementation of the Processes.

Well, I think it goes back to what I said earlier, that the principal and the leadership team must get a clear picture of the processes. That appropriate directives are given to teachers . . . the principal takes control. It's very much about the type of leadership each school principal would give (CEO/01).

On the other hand, too much paper work in the area of the Educational Audit process was a factor hindering the effective implementation of the processes.

I think we have to look at the Educational Audit process and streamline the paper work. We need to really look at that thoroughly and do some thinking about it. . . . It can be too spread out and can go on and on and people lose interest . . . (CEO/01).

The basic interpretation here is that the Processes need supervision or monitoring in order to be effective in the implementation.

*D: Overall Assessment of the Processes by the respondent:*

In the opinion of this respondent the Processes were a right step in the right direction. The respondent summed up the overall assessment in the following quote:

Well, I think, we are going pretty well. . . . If we were rating it on effective processes for quality assurance, I probably would give it eight out of ten (8/10). I think we are on the right track.

*E: Assessment of the level of awareness by the Researcher*

From the above it was clear that this respondent was aware of the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney. It was evident that the respondent could identify what made up the *Nature* of the Processes, what the *Outcomes* were and what factors were hindering or assisting the *Effectiveness* of the implementation of the Processes.

In light of the above, the level of awareness about the Quality Assurance Processes by this particular respondent was assessed as “*high*” following the set criteria.

*F: Assessment of the Quality of the interview responses by the Researcher*

The interview responses from this respondent touched on the essential and specific ideas relating to the subject of this present study. The respondent demonstrated a good grasp of the subject of study and provided quality answers to the questions asked at the interview as is evident in the analysis above. Consequently, the quality of the responses was assessed or rated as “*good*” following the set criterion.

### **Interview CEO/06**

*A: Nature of the Processes*

The respondent described quality assurance as “attempting to provide the standard of service that customers want”. In the CEO, quality assurance is used to identify and provide the standard of services the parents want for their children at schools.

The respondent then named the components of the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO to include: SRD, and PPPR.

The Processes have been put in place. One is called School Review & Development (SRD). The other part is leadership appraisal, which goes under the name of PPPR- and that is really leadership appraisal scheme (CEO/06).

*B: Outcomes of the Processes*

The respondent named a few items that constitute the outcomes of the Processes to include the improvement of leadership process at the schools levels and clarification of the goals in the educational agenda. In the words of the respondent:

They have got greater clarity about what are developmental goals in their school agenda and what are maintenance goals. I believe that the actual roles in the leadership of the schools have been refined subsequently. . . (CEO/06).

Here the underlined sentence was interpreted to refer to the key term “development” as the outcome of the Processes.

In another statement the respondent talked of clarifying the expectations of the school which was interpreted to refer to having a “*mission statement*”.

The respondent stated:

They have to get that clarity so that people are able to say in one common language, ‘look, here is the expectation, here is an interpretation of the expectation, this is how we can contribute to the development or advancement of the school’ (CEO/06).

*C: Effectiveness of the implementation of the Processes*

The respondent named a few factors that were affecting the implementation of the Quality Assurance Processes by describing what was involved in it in the following statements:

I think the basic factor would be, . . . you have the strong leadership of the Executive Director. The other reasons are the gradual introduction, the freedom given to Regional Consultant to negotiate each process and its pace of implementation. There is also a basic trust level between the CEO and the schools. (CEO/06).

“Leadership” has been directly mentioned in the quote as a factor. However, *freedom to negotiate each process and pace*, was interpreted to refer to “Ownership of the Processes”. Likewise, the expression *basic trust level between the CEO and the schools*, was interpreted to refer to proper “monitoring/supervision” as factor assisting the effectiveness of the implementation of the Processes.

*D: Overall Assessment of the Processes by the Respondent*

As it is evident, this respondent did not offer a general assessment of the Processes.

*E: Assessment of the level of awareness by the Researcher*

The report of the analysis above shows that the respondent could name a few of the components and a few of the other items relating to the Nature, Outcomes and Effectiveness of the Processes. There was no offer of an overall assessment of the Processes by the respondent and most of the statements needed interpretation to bring out the essential meaning or ideas. In light of the above, the level of awareness of the Processes by this respondent was assessed as “low”.

*F: Assessment of the quality of responses by the Researcher*

While the responses were not clearly expressed with the appropriate terminology to merit a “good” quality assessment, nor wander away from the main issues to merit a “poor” quality assessment, they always needed interpretation to bring out the meanings. The responses by this respondent were therefore, assessed as being of the “ordinary” quality.

## **Interview CEO/012**

*A: Nature of the Processes*

At this interview, the respondent talked about the PPPR as the only known component of the Processes. According to the respondent, the PPPR was the central process for the Catholic education office of Sydney.



The central process is the PPPR. At the beginning of the year the supervisor and the colleague have the initial meeting. They agree on an action plan for the year. Other processes would be ongoing evaluation processes like the selection of staff, the selection of Principal, assistant principal, etc. (CEO/012).

Here the respondent did not specify what was referred to as “other processes”, but the selection of principals, assistant principal, etc., was interpreted to refer to the “*contract renewal/consultation review*” process.

#### *B: Outcomes of the Processes*

The respondent could not come up with any specific subject or point about the outcomes of the Processes. Asked what were the outcomes so far from the implementation of the Processes, the respondent only explained the implementation procedures of the PPPR. In what seemed to be the closest hint to outcome, the respondent said: “I still think there’s a fair bit of work to be done on staff being really committed to the process, the PPPR process for instance”. It was possible to give a number of interpretations to the statement or answer. On one hand, this statement could be interpreted to refer to some expected future outcomes, and on the other hand it could refer to effectiveness in leadership. In the latter case the respondent could have been talking about subjects such as monitoring or supervision and the system support which actually belong to the section on Effectiveness. Given the possibility of such double interpretation, it was decided to ignore whatever central idea might be derived from that statement at this stage, and therefore, no score was entered under Outcomes for this respondent.

#### *C: Effectiveness of the implementation of the Processes*

At this stage it was evident that the respondent was solely concerned about and involved in the PPPR only. The effectiveness of the implementation of the PPPR was believed to depend much on the level of preparation by the parties involved and the preparedness to receive feedback.

I always put a lot of effort into preparing for it because I know there'd be things I have to negotiate for. . . . So if you prepare and if you are open to receiving feedback, then it's a valuable process (CEO/012).

*D: Overall assessment of the Processes by the respondent*

The respondent could not offer an overall assessment of the entire processes. Since the respondent all the way talked about one or two components of the Processes, it would have been unrealistic to attempt to offer an overall assessment. As a result, this interview represented an example of such interviews that did not 'measure up' to a certain standard.

*E: Assessment of the level of awareness by the Researcher*

It was clear from the report that this particular respondent showed awareness of just one aspect of the Processes namely- the PPPR. The level of awareness about the Processes by the respondent was therefore, assessed as "very low" following the set criterion.

*F: Assessment of the quality of interview responses by the Researcher*

The respondent often times used to 'wander away' from the main issues during the interview. While there were indications that the respondent had some idea about what to say, this was presented in rather confused order. The quality of the responses, therefore, was assessed as "poor".

These four interviews from *Category One* (respondents from the CEO) were preliminarily analysed to show how the level of awareness by respondents was assessed as "very high", "high", "low" and "very low" levels respectively. The result of this analysis and assessment of the level of awareness is presented as a coded summary in Table 5.3 below.

**Table 5.3: The Coded Result of the Analysis and Assessment of the Level of Awareness from the Selected Representative Interviews from Category One - CEO.**

KEY WORDS AND TERMS	CATEGORY ONE:- CEO RESPONDENTS			
<b>A: NATURE</b>	CEO/03	CEO/02	CEO/06	CEO/012
Quality Assurance Processes	✓	✓		
PPPR Process	✓	✓	✓	✓
SRD Process	✓	✓	✓	
Ed. Audit Process	✓	✓		
Contract Renewal Process		✓		✓
Strategic Management Plan	✓	✓		
Accountability Process	✓✓	✓✓		
Developmental Process	✓	✓		
<b>B: OUTCOMES</b>				
Accountability	✓	✓		
Development	✓	✓	✓	
Ensuring quality	✓	✓		
Mission Statement	✓	✓	✓	
Vision Statement	✓	✓		
Culture of Review	✓	✓		
Confidence at Work	✓			
Community involvement	✓	✓	✓	
<b>C: EFFECTIVENESS</b>				
Resources	✓	✓		
Ownership of Processes	✓		✓	
Effective Leadership	✓	✓	✓	✓
Feedback and Information		✓		✓
Monitoring/Supervision	✓	✓	✓	✓
System Support	✓	✓		✓
Affirming People				
Linking the Processes	✓			
Level of Awareness	very high	high	low	very low
Quality of Interview Response	good	good	ordinary	poor

The next section is the sample analysis of some selected or representative interviews from the schools - Category Two (SCH).

## 5.14 Representative Interviews from the Schools.

### Interview SCH/018

#### *A: Nature of the Processes*

For this respondent 'Quality Assurance' is an umbrella term with lots of things underneath it. It is both a *developmental* and *supervisory* notion. The *supervisory* part or notion gives the assurance about the quality of the particular item or issue, while the *developmental* notion has to do with the constant efforts to work out better ways of improving the quality.

The respondent stated that in the CEO, Sydney, Quality Assurance Processes refer to:

the SRD, Ed. Audit (designed for looking at the school and quality in educational program), PPPR (designed for the Principals and executives), and the Contract Renewal or Review Consultation (designed for the Principals). (SCH/018)

In the quote it can be seen that this respondent named all the components of the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, and these are noted by underlining them. Further, the respondent described the Processes as accountability measures designed for and by the stakeholders in the Catholic education system.

The respondent also stated:

Those who are involved, all stakeholders, have an opportunity to assure themselves that quality is occurring. It also enables accountability to the outsider as well as to the wider stakeholders, to the fund providers, to the supporters and to the wider community (SCH/018).

In all, the Processes are by nature 'quality measures/accountability measures' designed and put in place to assure all stakeholders in the Catholic Education system of the quality of the schools and educational services to the community.

*B: Outcomes of the Processes.*

In terms of the outcomes, the respondent noted that the Processes were an opportunity for people to 'stop and think and reflect' on or take stock of what they had done or were going to do in future. In the words of the respondent:

In terms of the PPPR, it makes you commit yourself to a plan of development . . . gives you that opportunity to stop, think, reflect about the role and make plan for development in it. And the same with SRD; it's that chance of stopping and having a look at how you are measuring up against the mission . . . feel sure that things are as they can be. The Ed. Audit provided a chance for the schools to look at themselves in terms of facilities and standards. (SCH/018)

Using the process of *meaning condensation*, the text was interpreted and the essential points made in the quote which constituted outcomes of the Processes could be derived to include: *Development plan; Culture of review; Ensuring quality*; among others.

*C: Effectiveness of the Implementation of the Processes.*

This respondent pointed out that the effectiveness of the Processes was being enhanced by the support and assistance provided by the Human Resources Department of the CEO. Here the respondent named "system support" as the factor that assists the effective implementation of the Processes.

The thing that assists them is that the system supports them ...with resources and the consultants' time invested in Process is a major thrust. You have the facilitator for SRD, you have the Ed. Audit team. So, it's built into the whole system of event, and you are not doing it alone in your own little school (SCH/018).

A further analysis or interpretation of the quote would reveal that 'resources' was named as a factor. Also, to have the facilitator for SRD and the Ed. Audit team was interpreted to refer to 'monitoring' or 'supervision', and not doing it alone was interpreted to refer to 'effective leadership' coming from the top - CEO. In essence, all these constitute factors that are assisting the effectiveness of the implementation of the Processes.

Also, the fact that the different components of the Processes do not 'fight' each other, but actually fit together and work towards the same goals, was seen by the respondent as a big factor assisting the effective implementation of the Processes:

The thing that helps is that all the bits of the 'jigsaw' fit together. PPPR, Contract Renewal, SRD and Ed. Audit are all part of a big jigsaw, they don't work against each other... they all can be written within one model, and they actually fit in and have the same philosophy (SCH/018)

This quote was interpreted to refer to the process of *linking* all the Quality Assurance Processes together to make them more effective.

The respondent also named factors hindering the effective implementation of the Processes to include the in 'time', 'finances' and 'human resources'.

The respondent stated:

There is the big cost in human resources, finance and time.

Other factors were identified as 'stress' and 'over-work' suffered by teachers undertaking the Educational Audit process, in particular. According to the respondent, teachers were further frustrated when the report at the end did not reflect the amount of work each teacher put into it individually.

So they involve themselves personally in the Ed. Audit. But when they get the report, it is only about the whole school and they don't get a mention. They feel that it doesn't reflect all the efforts that they thought they put into it. So the teachers are then disappointed. They put a lot of themselves in it, and there is nothing of themselves individually in the report (SCH/018).

Here the quote was interpreted to refer to the '*acknowledgment of achievement*' and '*affirmation of persons*' as factors assisting the implementation of the Processes, but would be hindering it if these were not practised or observed by the leadership of the

system.

*D: Overall assessment of the Processes by the respondent*

The respondent thought that the Processes are very good and that they are helping to put the Catholic Education system in Sydney in context with other such systems elsewhere in the world. The respondent offered the following assessment:

I fully support it as a series of things that fit together in a whole process... I think it's still at the beginning stage, but it's fine. There has been feedback every year from schools, from facilitator and from the audit teams. It's got a good feedback loop and a good self-reviewing loop. I just hope we don't falter, I hope we keep moving forward with it otherwise all those energies are lost (SCH/018).

*E: Assessment of the level of awareness by the Researcher*

From the above analysis it could be seen that the respondent was able to name all the components of the Quality Assurance Processes. The majority of the items that constitute the Outcomes and the majority of the factor affecting the effective implementation of the Processes were named/described. Finally, the respondent was able to offer an overall assessment of the entire Processes. Seeing that the respondent fulfilled specified conditions for the first example of the analysis, the level of awareness of the processes was assessed as “*very high*”.

*F: Assessment of the quality of interview responses by the Researcher*

As it is evident from the analysis above, the respondent was clear in the responses and all discussions were related to the nature, outcome and effectiveness of the Processes. The quality of the interview responses was, therefore, assessed as “*good*” following the criteria described earlier.

### Interview SCH/014

#### *A: Nature of the Processes.*

This respondent described quality assurance in general as ‘a process put in place to ensure that quality service (quality education) is provided in an organisation’. In the Catholic education system of Sydney Archdiocese, the respondent was able to name and describe the Processes in the following terms:

The three main ones as I understand are: School Review and Development (SRD), Educational Audit (which is very much curriculum focused . . .), and the Personnel Performance Planning and Review (PPPR) -which really is homing in on individuals within the system; the Principals, Assistant Principals, Religious coordinator and the Consultants (SCH/014).

In the above response, the respondent has named three main components of the Quality Assurance Processes. Further, in another statement, the respondent noted that the processes were designed by the CEO for the purposes of having something in place to assist in the running of the Catholic schools. This was regarded still as the naming and description of the nature of the Processes.

The respondent stated:

I think . . . to give you a sense of direction and purpose... they work to make you feel good. In a broader level it is meant to give direction and confidence, and promote accountability to the parents, students, staff and the entire system. . . (SCH/014).

The interpretations for the above quote are that the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO are by nature *directional* and consequently, intended to promote *confidence* as well as enhance the culture of *accountability* in the various stakeholder groups in the Catholic schools.

#### *B: Outcomes of the Processes.*

The respondent indicated that the first sign of outcome was the fact that the Processes provide room for development in the curriculum for instance.



Educational Audit gave us a push, . . . increasing curriculum option, vibrated awareness in teaching-learning processes, vibrated involvement in the in-service and professional development and active distribution of staff (SCH/014).

In terms of the SRD processes, the respondent noted that the outcome was the enhancement of the proper involvement of people who hold a stake in the Catholic schools in their different capacities.

The respondent stated thus:

It really involved the whole community of this school, the SRD. It unites the staff, the school and people know what they are working towards (SCH/014).

The essential points here are that the Processes enhance “*community involvement*” and give the people concerned the “*confidence*” they need at their work. That is why it is said that the school and the people know what they are working towards.

The respondent described the SRD process further as a “whole team show”.

Here was a situation when the researcher had to determine the meaning unit from a statement or expression made by the respondent. In this case the expression “*whole team show*” was again interpreted to refer to the “*involvement of the community*” in the implementation of the Quality Assurance Processes, particularly, the SRD.

### *C: Effectiveness of the Implementation of the Processes.*

While personnel was a big factor assisting the effectiveness of the processes, the respondent maintained that to recognise (affirming persons) what people try to do goes a long way to assisting the effectiveness of the Processes. In the words of the respondent:

Personnel is a big factor. People I have worked with are actually superb. With the PPPR, the outcome has been the formal recognition of the great work many people are doing in the schools (SCH/014).

Here the underlined expressions or statements were interpreted to refer to the terms: “Resources” and “Affirming persons” as some of the factors assisting the effective implementation of the Processes.

On the negative side, fear coupled with time resources were factors hindering the effective implementation of the processes:

Time and resources are always the problem, though they are minor things in this case . . . we don’t have to rush it in a short time. It has to be planned for some time so that it can take away the stress and anxiety. But I think some people would fear the Processes before they even get involved in them (SCH/014).

So for this respondent, extra time was needed for the effective implementation of the Processes. In effect, this is the case of “Effective Leadership” required to make the implementation more effective.

It was also the perceived notion of this respondent also, that the Educational Audit was rather rushed with too much “paper work” to be completed in a short period of time.

*D: Overall assessment of the Processes by the respondent:*

In an overall assessment this respondent thought that the entire Quality Assurance Processes were worthwhile because they help provide direction and continuity of school management procedures. The respondent stated: “In terms of what we are doing, the Processes are wonderful tools to use”.

*E: Assessment of the level of awareness by the Researcher*

This respondent named three (majority) out of the four components of the Processes. However, it was obvious that the respondent was very much aware of the Processes and familiar with their outcomes and the factors affecting the effectiveness of the

implementation. The level of awareness for this respondent was therefore, assessed as 'high' by the writer.

*F: Assessment of the quality of interview responses by the researcher*

The interview responses from this respondent touched on the essential and specific issue relating to the subject matter of this present study. The respondent demonstrated a 'good' grasp of the subject of study and the responses were related to the Nature, Outcome and Effectiveness of the Processes. Consequently, this was regarded as another example of the quality of interview responses rated or assessed as "good".

**Interview SCH/015.**

*A: Nature of the Processes.*

This respondent was able to name two main components of the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, namely: the School Review and Development (SRD) and the PPPR, and described them as:

Programs that are put in place to make sure that, teachers are fulfilling their requirements, and are supplying the children with the best possible education.  
(SCH/015)

*B: Outcomes of the Processes*

Essentially this respondent noted that the outcome from the SRD process included the ability to draw the stakeholders in the school together to discuss what they could do or what they wish to achieve. It provided a link between the school and the general community, according to this respondent. It also provides direction for the schools' programs.

I always wondered, who makes the decisions? Where am I as a teacher? etc. But because of the Process I learn more about the schools. . . . It seems to draw people together, and there is a link

between school. I think it helps to do that (SCH/015).

The first statement in the above quote appears to refer to 'decision-making'. However, an analysis of the second statement "where am I as a teacher?", shows that the respondent was thinking and speaking in terms of accountability. By meaning condensation, the two statements: "... who makes decisions?", and "where am I as teacher?" were interpreted to refer to another way of saying 'who is accountable to whom?' in the business of the schools. Another idea expressed in the quote is 'learning more about the school', which was interpreted to refer to the outcome of the Processes as a result of *better information*. Lastly, there is the point made here about the '*involvement of the whole community*' of the schools. This is expressed in the statement: 'It seems to draw people together, and there is a link between. . . .' Which means the Processes help to draw people together and get them involved in the affairs of the schools.

### *C: Effectiveness of the Implementation of the Processes*

The respondent was able to name some factors that could assist or hinder the effectiveness of the implementation of the Processes.

I think it is the type of people we have in the programme. I could imagine if we had a Principal that was not as good as (name suppressed), then we wouldn't have got so far. Yes, and also the people we had from the Catholic Education Office, they were really very good. They helped us, they gave us the backbone. They constantly used our ideas and made it our; they did not force their ideas into us during the SRD process (SCH/015).

By the process meaning condensation, the above quote was interpreted to refer to good *leadership* by principals as one of the factors that were assisting the effective implementation of the Processes. A further interpretation refers to the *support from the CEO* as a system which also made the school staff more confident as they engaged in the implementation of the Processes.

On the negative side, the apparent lack of information, commitment or involvement exhibited by some members of the SRD committee was observed by this respondent as a possible factor that could hinder the effectiveness of the Processes:

if you get those who are not willing to get involved, this will really drag the program back. Another thing that is hindering it is the lack of information about it (SCH/015).

*D: Overall assessment by the respondent*

Overall, the respondent thought that the Processes were worth having and implementing. However, the respondent based the assessment on just the two components of the Quality Assurance Processes which were named.

*E: Assessment of the level of awareness by the Researcher*

The respondent did not name/describe all the components of the Processes. The responses about outcomes and effectiveness were limited to the only known two components of the Processes. Therefore, the assessment of the level of awareness in this case was an example of those rated as “low” in the level of awareness.

*F: Assessment of the quality of interview responses by the Researcher*

Although the respondent had very limited level of awareness about the processes, it was possible to make sense out of the interview responses through the process of interpretation. Consequently the quality of the responses was assessed as an example of the “ordinary” level of quality according to the set criteria.

### Interview SCH/017

#### *A: Nature of the Processes*

The respondent described Quality Assurance Processes as ‘a way of making sure that whatever happens in an organisation is in accordance with set requirements’. Further, the respondent was able to name SRD as the component of the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney.

Asked to name the processes of the CEO, the respondent answered:

They have a lot of processes going on at the moment in schools, one of them being the SRD. They visit schools, they have appraisal all the time to assure that what is happening in the school is well done (SCH/017).

Apparently, the respondent knew that there were many processes but could not name or describe them all. However, as the interview progressed, mention was made of the Educational Audit as a “process where educational program is scrutinised.”

#### *B: Outcomes of the Processes*

The respondent noted that the outcome of SRD was more accountability and a change of school culture.

As far as the SRD in which I have been involved is concerned, I can say that schools are becoming more accountable to the Principals and the coordinators. We had a more amicable dealing with staff and students. . . . We had different approach to things and we tried to look at our failings and pick them up (SCH/017).

Here too, the expression “to look at our failings and pick them up” was interpreted to refer to the subject of *Culture of review*.

*C: Effectiveness of implementation of the Processes*

Based on the experience or knowledge of only one Process viz. SRD, the respondent was unable to name factors that were assisting or hindering the effectiveness of the implementation of the Processes.

*D: Overall assessment of the Processes by the respondent*

Informed by the SRD experience the respondent thought that the Processes should be very good, and necessary for the schools as long as there was leadership provided by the Principals:

Generally, I would say that ...I like them. The idea is great and it depends then on the leadership style as I said already. As long as you have strong leadership at the top, so that if people are not performing the leader can say you are not performing, and this is what you must do (SCH/017).

*E: Assessment of the level of awareness by the Researcher*

As it stood, the respondent was able to specifically name/describe only one component or item of the Processes. It was possible to name or describe one outcome, but named or described no factors hindering or assisting the effectiveness of the implementation of the Processes was named. As a result, an overall assessment was based on the limited experience or knowledge by the respondent about the Processes. In view of the above, the level awareness was assessed as “very low” according to the set criteria.

*F: Assessment of the quality of interview responses*

While the respondent did not wander a lot away from the main issue, it was evident that the responses were not enough to describe sufficiently the nature, outcome and effectiveness of the Processes. As a result the quality of the interview responses by this respondent was assessed and rated as “poor” according to the set criteria

As in the first example, these four interviews from *Category Two* (respondents from the Schools) were preliminarily analysed to show how the level of awareness by respondents was assessed as “very high”, “high”, “low” and “very low” levels respectively.

**Table 5.4** represents the summary of the assessment of the level of awareness determined from the four representative interviews from the SCH. In this Table the coding shows that respondent SCH/018 showed a *very high* level of awareness, respondent SCH/014 showed a *high level*, respondent SCH/015 showed a *low level* and respondent SCH/017 showed a rather *very low level* of awareness about the Quality Assurance Processes.



**Table 5.4** The Coded Result of the Analysis and Assessment of the Level of Awareness from the Selected Representative Interviews from Category Two -SCH.

KEY WORDS AND TERMS	CATEGORY TWO:- _SCH RESPONDENTS			
	SCH/018	SCH/014	SCH/015	SCH/017
<b>A: NATURE</b>				
Quality Assurance Processes	✓	✓		✓
PPPR Process	✓	✓	✓	
SRD Process	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ed. Audit Process	✓	✓		
Contract Renewal Process	✓			
Strategic Management Plan				
Accountability Process	✓			
Developmental Process	✓			
<b>B: OUTCOMES</b>				
Accountability	✓	✓	✓	
Development		✓		✓
Ensuring quality	✓	✓		
Mission Statement	✓	✓		
Vision Statement		✓		
Culture of Review	✓	✓		✓
Confidence at Work		✓		
Community involvement	✓		✓	
<b>C: EFFECTIVENESS</b>				
Resources	✓	✓	✓	
Ownership of Processes	✓	✓		
Effective Leadership	✓	✓	✓	
Feedback and Information	✓			
Monitoring/Supervision	✓			
System Support	✓	✓		
Affirming People		✓		
Linking the Processes	✓			
<b>Level of Awareness</b>	<b>very high</b>	<b>high</b>	<b>low</b>	<b>very low</b>
<b>Quality of Interview Responses</b>	<b>good</b>	<b>good</b>	<b>ordinary</b>	<b>poor</b>

### 5.15 Summary of Section Two

The eight representative interviews just presented above were selected from the Main Study interviews for the preliminary analysis. The purpose of this early analysis was to allow both the writer and reader have a feel of the content of the interviews conducted as

the main data source for this project, and also to demonstrate how they were treated during the process of analysis. The representative or selected interview analysis was intended to serve as an example of how the level of awareness of the respondents about the Processes, and the quality of interview responses were assessed.

From the result of the analysis above, it was becoming obvious that the level of awareness and perceptions about the Quality Assurance Processes by two categories of respondents would not be the same. For instance, in the report of the representative interviews in Table 5.2, it can be observed that two out of four respondents from the CEO used the term 'Strategic Management Plan' as part of the nature of the Processes. But not one of the four representatives from SCH ever mentioned the term. It is possible to conclude here that, at the time of this study, only the CEO staff members could understand and associate the term 'Strategic Management Plan' with the Quality Assurance Processes.

Further, the respondents from Category One -the CEO- showed higher level of awareness and appeared more familiar with the Processes than the respondents from Category Two - the SCH. From the above table again, it can be observed that at least one in four of the respondents from the SCH may not have known or heard of the term 'Quality Assurance' used in education, let alone the Catholic education system in Sydney. Most of them were only aware of the SRD and the Educational audit as individual processes and not actually called 'quality assurance'. On the contrary, the table shows that four out of four representative respondents from the CEO had heard and known the term 'Quality Assurance' to be associated with the Catholic Education system and most were found to be quite familiar with the entire processes.

There was no evidence to suggest that those who did not identify or mention certain or all the subjects or themes were opposed to the implementation or idea of Quality Assurance Processes. Rather the lack of mention would mean that those either did not simply think of the subjects, or did not know any more than what they had named. For example, a

respondent had named some of the components or subjects of the Nature of the Processes but the interviewer felt that it was not enough, and so decided to probe for more. During probing, the respondent was asked: “Do you know about ‘Contract Renewal . . .? Is it part of the Processes?” The respondent said in reply: “that is rather an embarrassing question”. It was ‘embarrassing’ because the respondent (who was a principal and had actually been through that particular process), felt bad for not having named the item or subject. In a case such as this, the respondent was aware of the subject but did not think of it at the time of the questioning. Such was not interpreted by the researcher as lack of awareness or ignorance, rather as unexpressed knowledge.

In situations where the respondents did not know any more than they had named, further probes and the answers received made such quite evident. For instance, a respondent who just named two items - SRD and Educational audit- was probed for more and the response was politely and simply: “I don’t know any more”. In light of all this, there were questions to be asked about whether or not the various key players in the Quality Assurance Processes were sufficiently aware of their existence, and how effective was the method of introduction as well as the implementation of the Processes. These and similar differences between the respondents are in section three of this Chapter, which deals with the contrasting/comparison of perceptions of the two categories of respondents about the Processes.

### **SECTION THREE: COMPARISON OF THE PERCEPTIONS OF RESPONDENTS FROM THE CEO AND THE SCHOOLS**

The preliminary analysis of the Main Study interviews presented in the previous section was, among other things, an occasion for the researcher to discover and determine the perceptions (level of awareness) of the various respondents about the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO. Once again, this section presents a ‘testing case’ for the

comparative analysis with selected interviews to demonstrate how the method is applied in the study.

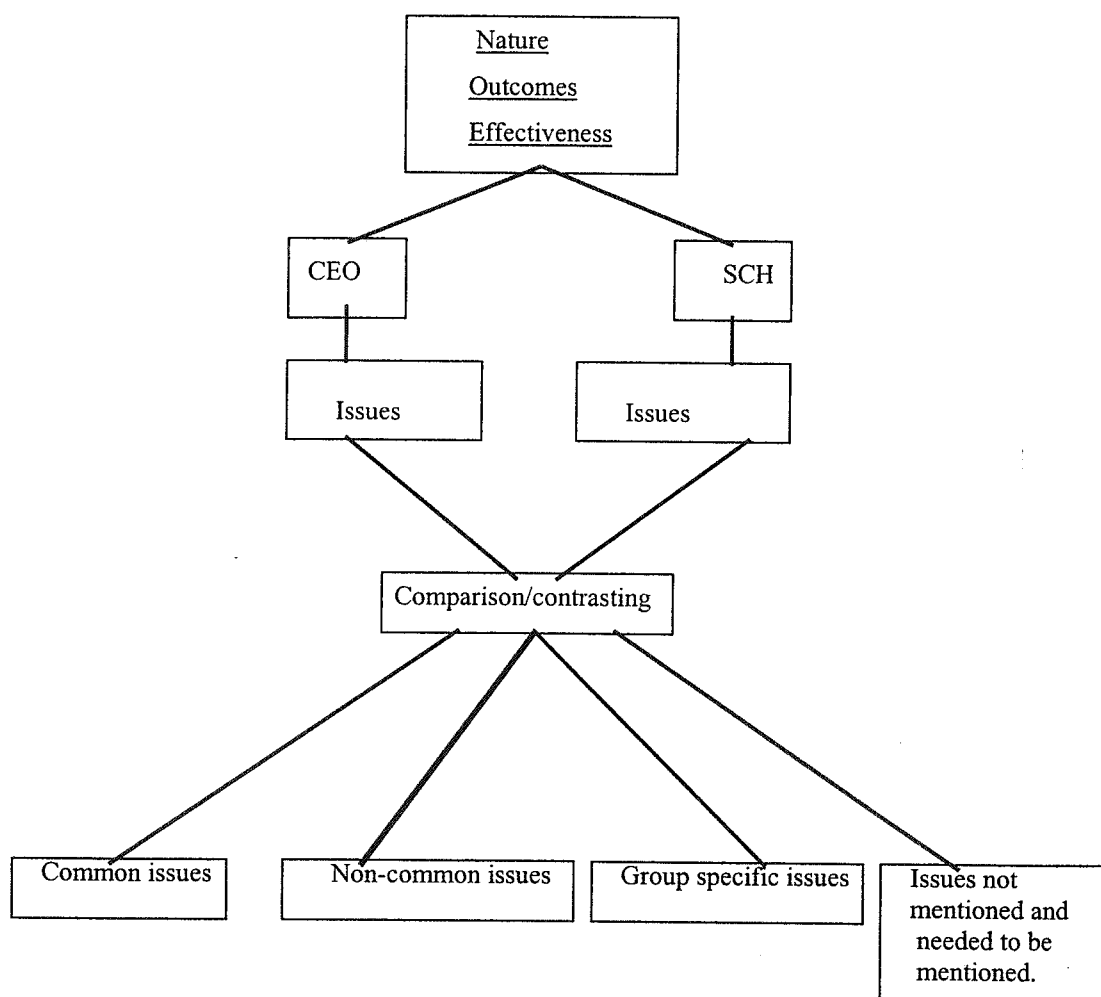
In the subsequent chapter(s), the analysis and comparison of all the Main Study interviews will be reported. The aim of this section is, therefore, to sample the various issues or subjects matters arising from the interviews with the two categories of respondents concerning their perceptions and awareness about the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney. These are compared to identifying any specific differences and/or commonalties that might exist between the two categories of respondents in the way they named or described, and therefore, perceived of the Quality Assurance Processes. The differences and/or commonalties may be such that could directly or indirectly constitute the factors assisting or hindering the effectiveness of the implementation of the Processes. The expectation is that the results or outcomes of this exercise (section) would provide the present researcher with further insight to the Study to be able to reach informed conclusions and offer appropriate recommendations or suggestions for the future of the Quality Assurance Processes.

#### **5.16 Method and Criteria for Comparing the Perceptions**

To facilitate this comparative analysis, it was again considered necessary to have a specific standard or criterion upon which to base the judgement or decision. In that regard, it was convenient and, indeed, logical to refer back to the significant key words or terms which were earlier used to assess the level of awareness and quality of interview responses (see Table 5.1). The key words or terms represented the major subjects or issues that constitute the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO. These were listed under the main object of the present study- Nature, Outcomes and Effectiveness of the Processes. Thus, it was possible to compare and contrast the themes or issues emerging from the analysis of the as named/described by the respondents from both categories.

Figure 5.1 is a conceptual diagram that maps out the direction for the comparative analysis of themes or subjects.

**Figure 5.1:** Concept Map showing the Direction of Comparative Analysis



Following the above concept map, the comparisons/contrasting were designed to identify: (i) what issues were common among the respondents; (ii) what issues were different between the respondents; (iii) what issues were specific to each group; and (iv) what issues (in the opinion of this writer) should have been mentioned but were not mentioned as those respondents named/described the Nature, Outcomes and Effectiveness of the

Processes.

The first ten interviews from each Category (that means 20 out of the 34 interviews) were used as representative interviews for the comparison/contrasting exercise. The selection of ten interviews from each category was to make sure there were equal numbers respondents from each side, so that the comparative analysis of level awareness of the respondents will be balanced. Accordingly, interviews designated CEO/01- CEO/010 from Category One, and interviews designated SCH/014- SCH/023 from Category Two, were selected for this purpose.

In identifying the Nature of the Processes, it was found that most of the issues were better understood among the CEO respondents than among the SCH respondents. Ten out of ten respondents named or described *PPPR* and *SRD* as subjects or main components of the Processes. Whereas eight out of ten of the SCH respondents named the same subjects in the same questions or at the same circumstances. In another and rather striking instance, seven out of ten CEO respondents named or described *Contract Renewal* as well as the *Strategic Management Plan* among the subjects under the Nature of the Processes, while only one out of ten of SCH respondents in each case, named Strategic Management Plan as well as the Contract Renewal. Again, eight out of ten respondents from the CEO described the entire Quality Assurance Processes as an “*accountability process*” and eight respondents described it as a *developmental process*, while only five out of ten respondents in the SCH described it as *accountability process* and just three out of ten saw it as a *developmental process*.

It would appear that subjects such as the *Contract Renewal* and the *Strategic Management Plan* were named by those group of respondents who were involved in management or administrative activities in the Catholic Education system, particularly respondents from the CEO such as the consultants. Likewise, *Contract Renewal* was only mentioned by one out of the ten respondents from the SCH (a Principal, therefore, in management position), but was named by seven out of the ten respondents from the CEO.

Under Outcomes, subjects (issues) that received high mention included: *ensuring quality*; *accountability* and *culture of review* and *mission statement*. Nine out of ten CEO respondents named *ensuring quality* as an outcome of the Processes, while five out of ten SCH respondents named the same subject. Eight out of ten CEO respondents named/described the *mission statement* among outcomes compared to five out of ten SCH respondents. While three respondents from the CEO considered *vision statement* as an outcome, not one of the SCH respondents saw the subject in that light. In the case of *culture of review*, eight out of ten CEO as against seven out of ten SCH respondents named this subject. Seven of the CEO respondents compared to four of the SCH respondents named community involvement as an outcome of the Processes. The least named subject in this sector was work confidence. Only two out of ten from CEO and one out of ten from SCH named this subject.

Under Effectiveness, the common subjects included: *effective leadership*; *resources*; *monitoring/supervision*. That means respondents from both categories readily named these among what they believed were the factors contributing to the effectiveness of the implementation of the Processes. Seven respondents from CEO, compared to six respondents from the SCH, named or used the subject *resources*. Five from CEO compared to three from the SCH named *ownership*. Nine from CEO compared to eight from SCH named *effective leadership*; and four out of ten from CEO compared to two out of ten from SCH named *feedback and information system* as factors influencing the effectiveness of the implementation of the Processes. The least mentioned subject was the '*linking of the processes*' which was named by only two out of ten respondents from the CEO and only one respondent from the SCH.

Further, it was possible to compare and contrast the subjects or issues according to Regional divisions of the CEO Sydney namely: Eastern Region, Inner Western Region and the Southern Region. It was found that the procedures for the implementation of the Processes were the same across the Regions. The respondents were asked how they

would 'meet up' with the Processes if they were transferred from one Region to another in their employment with the CEO? No respondent saw any difficulties in such a situation because "the same things, the same Processes, are implemented in all the Regions".

The following quote represents the opinion expressed by the respondents from across the Regions:

Well, we are all doing the same Processes. . . . The Directors of the Southern Region, Eastern Region and Inner Western Region are part and parcel of the team of Directors, and the team of Directors oversee this. We talk over it all the time, and we publish guidelines for the whole system, not just for one Region. (CEO/011)

Although there were male and female participants involved in this study, such variables did not constitute points or parts of this comparative analysis simply because it is too personal, and as stated earlier, such personal issues were not the concerns of the present study. This has, however, been recommended for future research in this or related topic areas.

Table 5.5.1 and Table5.5.2 represent the coded results and score-sheets for the comparison and contrasting of the first ten interviews (respondents) from CEO and SCH respectively.



Table 5.5.1: The Coded Result of the first Ten Respondents (interviews) from the CEO

KEY WORDS AND TERMS MAKING UP THE SUBJECTS FROM THE INTERVIEWS	CATEGORY ONE – CEO										
A: NATURE	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	010	Total
Quality Assurance Processes	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	9/10
PPPR Process	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	10/10
SRD Process	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	10/10
Ed. Audit Process	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	8/10
Contract Renewal Process	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓✓	✓	✓	7/10
Strategic Management Plan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓✓			7/10
Accountability Process	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓✓			✓	✓	✓	8/10
Developmental Process	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓	7/10
B: OUTCOMES											
Accountability	✓	✓	✓		✓				✓	✓	6/10
Development	✓		✓	✓		✓				✓	5/10
Ensuring quality	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	9/10
Mission Statement	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	8/10
Vision Statement	✓	✓	✓								3/10
Culture of Review	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	8/10
Work confidence			✓							✓	2/10
Community involvement	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓		7/10
C: EFFECTIVENESS											
Resources	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓	7/10
Ownership of Process		✓	✓		✓	✓			✓		5/10
Effective leadership	✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	9/10
Feedback and information	✓				✓		✓			✓	4/10
Monitoring/Supervision	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		✓	7/10
System support	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	7/10
Affirming people		✓		✓				✓	✓		4/10
Linking the Processes			✓							✓	2/10

Table 5.5.2: The Coded Result of the first Ten Respondents (interviews) from the Schools (SCH).

KEY WORDS AND TERMS MAKING UP THE SUBJECTS FROM THE INTERVIEWS	CATEGORY TWO - SCH										
<b>A: NATURE</b>	<b>014</b>	<b>015</b>	<b>016</b>	<b>017</b>	<b>018</b>	<b>019</b>	<b>020</b>	<b>021</b>	<b>022</b>	<b>023</b>	<b>Total</b>
Quality Assurance Processes	✓		✓	✓	✓✓	✓			✓	✓	7/10
PPPR Process	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	8/10
SRD Process	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			8/10
Ed. Audit Process	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		6/10
Contract Renewal Process					✓						1/10
Strategic Management Plan										✓	1/10
Accountability Process					✓✓	✓	✓		✓✓	✓✓	5/10
Developmental Process					✓				✓	✓	3/10
<b>B: OUTCOMES</b>											
Accountability	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	8/10
Development	✓			✓		✓					3/10
Ensuring quality	✓				✓		✓		✓	✓	5/10
Mission Statement	✓		✓		✓			✓	✓		5/10
Vision Statement											0/10
Culture of Review	✓✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	7/10
Work confidence	✓										1/10
Community involvement	✓	✓						✓	✓✓		4/10
<b>C: EFFECTIVENESS</b>											
Resources	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	6/10
Ownership of Process	✓				✓				✓		3/10
Effective leadership	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	8/10
Feedback and information					✓	✓					2/10
Monitoring/Supervision			✓		✓			✓	✓	✓	5/10
System support	✓	✓					✓	✓	✓		5/10
Affirming people	✓		✓		✓						3/10
Linking the Processes					✓						1/10

### 5.17 Evaluation of the Representative Analysis and Comparison

Table 5.5.1 and Table 5.5.2 above represent the score-sheets on which the results of the analysis of interviews from each category are shown. These Tables are the typical examples of the record maintained throughout this study to indicate when a respondent used the key words or terms to name or describe the nature, outcomes and factors affecting the effective implementation of the Quality Assurance Processes.

From the result of the analysis above, it was already becoming obvious at this stage that the two categories of respondents would show different levels of awareness and perceptions about the Quality Assurance Processes. For instance, in the Tables it can be observed that out of ten CEO respondents, seven used the term 'Strategic Management Plan', while only one respondent from the SCH did likewise. Also, going back to the report of the representative interviews in Table 5.3 earlier, it can be noticed that three out of four respondents from the CEO used the term 'Strategic Management Plan', but not one of the four representatives from SCH ever mentioned the term. This observation could lead to various conclusions such as: the 'Strategic Management Plan' was specific to the CEO group of respondents because they are all involved in administration; the 'Strategic Management Plan' does not concern Quality Assurance Processes; or, the SCH respondents do not know of any connection between the Processes and the Strategic Management Plan. This will be further treated in the evaluation and conclusion chapter.

There were still other differences observed between the CEO and the SCH respondents still pointing to the fact that the respondents had varied perceptions about the Processes when taken together. For instance the CEO respondents gave the impression that the Processes were designed as a response to a request from the schools (the principals) that needed some strategic means of assessing their work.

One respondent from the CEO stated it thus:

The principals were saying to us, 'would you give us a process to look at our schools . . . can you help us with the process which helps us to be

critically reflective on the highly technical element of curriculum provision?'  
(CEO/05)

On the contrary, the SCH respondents gave the impression that the Processes were imposed on the schools by the Catholic Education central administration. As such, the schools had no choice except to accept them.

One respondent from the SCH stated it thus:

Generally it took the form of an edict. Some form of letter would come from the head office with some instruction to the principal. . . .  
You are just told it will occur!  
(SCH/031)

While this may not in itself be a serious issue, it does point to some form of variation in the perceptions of the respondents, and in this case the variation is to be attributed to some slack or ineffective communication or information.

Most respondents from the CEO appeared to be quite familiar with, and made frequent reference to the subjects *PPPR*, *SRD*, and *Educational Audit* as they named and described the Nature of the Processes. The same could not be said of the respondents from the SCH. Most respondents from the SCH were rather unsure whether or not the subject *Contract Renewal*, in particular, was part of the Quality Assurance Processes. In fact, throughout the interviews, only five respondents out of a total of twenty-one from the SCH, were found to name/describe *Contract Renewal* as a component of the Quality Assurance Processes. On the contrary, nine out of a total of thirteen respondents from the CEO had named this subject.

It was a common belief that the use of the term 'Quality Assurance' in education was a *recent adaptation* from what used to be exclusively industrial or business language.

One respondent from the CEO stated:

Quality Assurance is not our term in the sense that it is used in the business and the media. But it was a convenient term for us to put together the processes that we have.  
(CEO/010)

With regards to the issue of effectiveness of implementation, the Educational Audit Process was not only described by both categories of respondents as ‘time consuming’ but also as a very stressful process for teachers. Almost all respondents from both categories CEO and SCH denounced the daunting task of filling too many forms in the Educational Audit process. In simple terms, the respondents described their experience as “too much paper work”.

The following quotes from both categories of respondents depict the common trend or common feelings about the Educational Audit process:

I don’t know how to react to Educational Audit, I think it is a bit threatening.  
(SCH/016)

The Educational Audit is very stressful. Educational Audit must cut down on the paper work because some are duplications.  
(SCH/033)

One of the things we would do is to reduce the paper work around the Educational Audit.  
(CEO/010)

There are some areas where we have duplications in SRD and Educational Audit, they need some refinement to make it easier.  
(CEO/011)

A further difference was found in the method of implementation and reporting of SRD processes. While the CEO has provided set formats and guidelines, some schools were known to have gone outside those guidelines in their presentation of the reports. In their effort to do ‘very well’ or be exceptional the schools sometimes bring extra work on themselves.

A school respondent at one of the interviews said:

Staff, sometimes Principals or the executive of the schools, they take the opportunity to try to really sell the school and be over impressive. . . . There are set down procedures but people being what they are, they tend to ignore the guidelines.  
(SCH/014)

In other words, there is a competitive spirit among the schools to do something differently and outside the format that the CEO has designed for the Processes. Such tendencies were sure to introduce duplications into the processes and, possibly, hinder the effectiveness of the implementation.

### 5.18 Summary of this Chapter

In this Chapter, an initial effort has been made to analyse the Main Study interviews of this present project so as to be able to determine the level of awareness and perceptions of the respondents about the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney. Some respondents made direct statements that were easily understood. Others made statements that needed interpretation or evaluations. By the process of *Meaning Condensation*, it was possible to interpret *indirect statements* from the interviews that could convey such perceptions and awareness of other respondents about the Processes. This also made it possible to assess the quality of interview responses from each respondent.

The perceptions of the two different categories of respondents (CEO & SCH) were compared and contrasted. Few differences in what the respondents perceived or believed about the Processes were observable. However, most themes or issues were found to be common to both categories.

In general, it would appear that apart from apparent difficulties expressed about the Educational Audit Process, all other aspects of the Processes appeared to have been favoured by a majority of the respondents. Among the school teachers, the SRD process was most appreciated, whereas PPPR was foremost in the minds of Principals and the CEO senior staff who were participants.

Further, the respondents from the CEO showed higher level of awareness and appeared more familiar with the Processes than the respondents from SCH. From the summary

shown on Table 5.5.1 and Table 5.5.2, it can be observed that not many respondents from the SCH used the term 'Quality Assurance' in their responses. What this suggests is that they may not have known or heard of the term 'Quality Assurance' used in education, let alone the Catholic Education system in Sydney. Most of them were only aware of the SRD and the Educational Audit as individual processes and not actually called 'quality assurance'. On the contrary, twelve of the thirteen respondents from the CEO had heard and known about the term 'Quality Assurance' associated with the Catholic Education system, and most respondents in this category were found to be quite familiar with the entire Processes.

In the next chapter, the presentation will incorporate the analysis and results of all the interviews conducted for the Main Study project.

## CHAPTER SIX

### REPORT OF THE ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION ON THE MAIN STUDY INTERVIEWS

#### 6.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, a number of the Main Study interviews were preliminarily analysed to provide a feel and to ascertain that the analytical procedures adopted for this present project actually do work. Also using specific criteria, the level of awareness of the two categories of respondents was assessed, and their perceptions about the Processes were compared and contrasted. Some preliminary differences and commonalities between the respondents were observed and noted accordingly.

This present Chapter continues the analysis of the rest of the Main Study interviews and in greater detail. Applying all of the procedures and techniques that have been tested and proved in the last chapter, the present Chapter discusses and evaluates the data from all the interviews conducted in the Main Study. The discussion incorporates the results of all the interviews, underlining the salient points and issues that are identified as factors that are assisting and/or hindering the effectiveness of the Quality Assurance Processes. The discussions are approached and presented in three levels and in relation to the three headlines maintained in the interviews schedule for this project (see Appendix F). In this way, there is consistency in the presentation of the various reports and in all the chapters of this work. Accordingly, the headings under which the discussions are held are presented thus:

**The Nature of the Processes,**  
**The Outcomes of the Processes, and**  
**The Effectiveness of the implementation of the Processes.**



First, the analysis and discussions are focused on the Nature of the Processes. In this section the researcher will be looking to find statements and expressions by the respondents that can name and describe the Processes. Such statements and expressions are expected to answer or address questions contained in Schedule A ( Appendix E) of the Main Study interviews.

Next, the discussion focuses on the Outcomes of the Processes and seeks to identify what have been seen or perceived by the respondents as the:

- *Positive Outcomes of the Processes*
- *Negative Outcomes of the Processes, and*
- *Outcomes yet to be achieved through the Processes.*

In this way the issues on Schedule B of the Main Study interviews are addressed.

Lastly, the discussion considers the Effectiveness of Processes by determining and analysing those issues named or described by the respondents as the:

- *Factors assisting the effectiveness of the Processes; and*
- *Factors hindering the effectiveness of the Processes.*

In this way the issues on Schedule C of the Main Study interviews are addressed.

The chapter concludes with the list of general perceptions by the respondents about the entire Quality Assurance Processes determined through the process of data analysis. This also serves as part of the summary of the entire Main Study interview analysis.

## **6.2 The Nature of the Processes**

Among the ways of identifying, knowing and describing the nature of an object or a person is by naming. Physical and tangible objects can also be identified or recognised through the senses of touch or sight. Quality Assurance Processes are an idea, a management practice and philosophy or a manner of doing things to achieve specific goals in an organisation. They are not tangible or physical objects, and so their nature cannot be known by touch, sight or feeling. The nature of Quality Assurance Processes

can only be revealed or expressed in the description of the various things they do and mean, or are meant to do to the organisation, in this present case, the Catholic education system. In this study therefore, the *Nature* of the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney is manifested in the various ways the respondents presented these Processes, the different components of the Processes and in the various needs they are designed to serve in the Catholic Education System.

The Quality Assurance Processes were described by some respondents as an evaluation program through which practices, the work of the schools' staff members are evaluated and quality standards are assessed. Hence, unlike other quality assurance practices elsewhere, the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney do not concentrate on finding faults, rather they seek to affirm the people and recommend them for their good work and encourage them to celebrate achievements. This does not mean that the practices totally ignore faults, rather faults are corrected and not over-emphasised.

A respondent gave a typical description of this situation thus:

Our Quality Assurance Processes are driven by a concept of improved performance, it is not like an inspection to find faults. It is identifying the areas that things are going well and affirming them, giving praise for the excellent achievement. The aim is not to make people feel threatened for fear they might lose their job or so, but to look for the positive and . . . help to achieve more. All this makes it different from what others call quality assurance in other places. (CEO/07).

Next the Processes were seen and described by other respondents as a means of setting standards and limits of operational activities, thereby making it possible for the school system to be effectively accountable to the various interest groups or stakeholders.

What we have created is a set of structures or processes which, first of all, places a requirement on the people in/and the system. Secondly, it gives people in the schools the parameters within which they can operate and can determine where they are up to (CEO/08).

Our Quality Assurance is not about measuring the number of things we do or the amount of money we generate. It is focused on teaching children to the best of our ability. It is a process by which we can demonstrate to the parents and the school community that the quality of the work in the school is at some set or expected standard.

(CEO/04).

Some saw the Processes as a structured way of getting the maximum involvement of the members of the community in the affairs of education in general and the schools in particular.

Parents groups, parish priests and apparently the entire parish community have opportunity to reflect and share in what is happening in the schools.

(CEO/01).

The image of the community is becoming widely used in recent times as a metaphor for the schools setting or organisation. As Sergiovanni and Starratt (1993) emphasise:

We believe that schools should be understood as learning communities. Communities are defined by their centres. Centres are repositories of values, sentiments and common beliefs that provide the cement for bonding people in a common cause. . . . In sum, centres express what is of worth to the school and provide a set of norms that guide behaviour and give meaning to school community life (p. 48).

The point being made here is that an approach to quality or quality assurance should better be based on the understanding of the school as a community where values, sentiment and common beliefs abound. This present study found that the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO are underpinned by the theme of community involvement. In particular, the SRD process is community-oriented by its very nature and design. The central administration of the CEO Sydney designed and introduced the SRD Process so that it could be taken over by the different Regional teams. It is then offered to the school community to take full ownership through the implementation. It is at this level and circumstance that the 'culture of review' is developed and maintained.

Again, the Processes were described by some respondents as an evaluation technique or mechanism for putting a check on the Catholic education system. This was especially true

of the Educational Audit and the SRD Processes. A respondent expressed this idea thus:

The Educational Audit is a very technical method for auditing and reviewing our schools. The schools review their educational programs from the point of view of the syllabus, school policy, teachers' and children's work book, and the schools prepare reports on their performance which are then validated by the Review Team.

(CEO/01).

Another respondent saw the Processes as:

a filtering mechanism in place that can help school communities deal with the massive change initiatives that are being foisted upon them.

(CEO/03).

A further understanding about the nature of the Processes was that they are a structured-management-strategy which provides an opportunity for interactions and consultations between a school and the wider community of the parish in matters of common interest. They allow people to 'tap into one another' in a way of sharing and contributing ideas for the building up of the community. The Processes are designed as a means of breaking down barriers and thereby helping to develop a sense of collegiality among fellow workers in the school and among other stakeholders in the system. In this regard some of the respondents remarked thus:

Staff are now working together and looking within their schools to meet the needs of the schools. . . . This brings teachers out of individual classrooms to have a broader picture and a broader view of what is required within the school set up

(SCH/027)

The Processes provide a sense of belonging to the whole school as an organisation; a community meeting the school vision, mission, goals and priorities. As a result there exists far greater cohesiveness, far greater goal and planning for further development

(CEO/02).

The picture is painted here of the Processes with the capacity to enhance interaction among the users. In this case they are, by nature, strategies for promoting public relations.

Some other respondents thought that the Processes could better be described as an 'accountability mechanism' especially for people in the position of responsibility.

By having Quality Assurance Processes it means that whatever happens, whatever process you go through, the quality will be assured, and it will be done well. I think that once you have these Processes in place, schools are more accountable. Accountability is the important idea in the design.  
(SCH/017).

Quality Assurance Processes are about the whole issue of accountability. The Processes of the CEO were introduced first of all to response to the government question. But I think it was more for accountability. They are accountability Processes for those of us in the position of responsibility as a Principal.  
(SCH/024).

It is understood from the above that the Processes have been designed for the purposes of accountability and development as well. In fact an important and relevant publication from the CEO Sydney has testified to this and described and defined the Processes as:

a development and accountability network which satisfies the Registration and Accreditation requirements of the Board of Studies and, even more importantly, offers an overall planning and development structure for schools within the Archdiocesan system  
(Canavan, 1993, ED/174, p. 3).

The purpose of this section has been to determine the distinctive nature of the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney through the analysis of the data obtained from the interviews with the various respondents. While none of the respondents described the Processes in any specific words or language and fashion to be a formal definition, the discussion has been able to offer the basic ideas and the basic ingredients that can make it possible and feasible to understand the nature of the Processes.

The next section discusses what the Outcomes of the Processes have been perceived of and expressed by the various respondents at the interviews.

### 6.3 The Outcomes of the Processes

It is one thing to design and implement the Quality Assurance Processes, but it is another to find out whether they have any results or outcomes. From the preliminary analysis presented in the previous chapter, there was a sense and 'a feel' that the Processes have generated a number of outcomes since their implementation. In this section of this present chapter a wide range of outcomes have been identified and analysed citing some specific expressions or statements from the respondents. These outcomes were identified and classified in three different dimensions or headings namely: *positive outcomes*, *negative outcomes* and, *outcomes yet to be achieved through these Processes*.

#### Positive Outcomes

Positive outcomes of any program, process or organisation refer to those goals that were expected to be achieved and have been achieved as expected by the program, process or organisation designers. In the case of this present project, positive outcomes must necessarily relate to the purpose for which the Quality Assurance Processes were designed and implemented. They must be issues or matters that have occurred in the schools or the system that are judged to enhance or have the potential to enhance Quality in the Catholic schools system of Sydney Archdiocese. This present study found the majority of respondents expressing, and even naming, many of the positive outcomes that have been achieved through the Processes.

The first sign of positive outcome is that those individuals and groups who have been involved in parts or in whole of the Processes consciously and actively contribute to the development and improvement of the Catholic education in a way that has not been done before. A respondent typically described the feeling and opinion of the majority thus:

I think looking at it as a teacher, the positive outcomes that I would see is, it has given me more direction to where I am heading more than ever before. I think it helps the schools to run a lot smoother, and the

schools, the CEO and other people are working together to improve the quality of education (SCH/020)

The School Review and Development (SRD) process makes it possible for each school to produce a mission statement of its own. SRD is a 'whole community' program of activities which are achieved through the participation and consultation of the school 'constituent groups' (CEO, 1994, p. 19). It provides opportunity for everyone interested to make a contribution and also have that sense of belonging and fulfilment.

A respondent noted:

One aspect (outcome) of the Quality Assurance that I like is that it gives everyone the opportunity to have some input into the life of the school, and that is crucial. The total staff is involved, from the cleaner to the principal . . . everyone has opportunity to contribute to the development of the school. . . . Teachers do it themselves, and do not always think that somebody else has made the decision for them. So they take ownership of whatever decisions are made about the school.  
(SCH/033)

There have been growing involvement of various groups of people such as the parents and other members of the school communities. Following this, schools are becoming clearer about their mission and their goals.

Thus a respondent remarked:

Our schools are now much more attuned to their own Quality Assurance . . . they know what they are doing. A lot of development has taken place with the focus on quality in our schools (CEO/01).

A further positive outcome is that the CEO now designs its own auditing processes through which instrumentality it not only fulfils the government requirements of curriculum (Educational audit sector), but also assesses the quality of Religious Education in the particular way the Catholic schools are expected to do. The Quality Assurance Processes have been described as the first collective instrument by means of which the schools report to the parent community. Directors and consultants get a formal opportunity to really see how the schools are going. The implementation of the Processes

provides opportunity for teachers to improve performance and to develop their skills as they take part in the activities of the 'Audit Resource Persons' as members.

It was opinion or belief of the respondents that the implementation of the Processes has made the Catholic Education system in Sydney more accountable to the Church, the government and the wider community. As a result, the Catholic schools in Sydney Archdiocese are becoming quite popular and attractive to the society. For instance a respondent asserted:

I believe that these are probably the best of processes. They provide direction and focus; and for this, the Catholic schools are becoming more efficient, popular and, if you like, more attractive to the outside world.  
(CEO/09).

A further proof of the outcomes can be shown in the fact that Catholic schools are performing better than before with high level of performance and achievements, both in private and public tests and examinations such as the national standardised test in reading and writing (CEO Annual Report, 1996). Consequently the Catholic schools' profile has improved and the public attitude is much healthier than before.

It was also the opinion of the respondents that a major and positive outcome of the Processes has been the development of the 'culture of review and reflection' in the school system. The Processes make it possible for the teachers or Principals to stop and examine what they are doing, and that culture of review and reflection is regarded as an important and necessary ingredient in education. This opinion was expressed in the quotes such as the following:

There is no denying that it is additional work in gathering the data and taking extra time, but to reflect on what you do is an important aspect of learning and the reality of teaching. Unless the space is created for you, you may rarely make time for yourself. The system has provided for each school (through the Processes) a space and time where they can reflect on what they do, acknowledge the good that they do and develop a plan of action that is going to make it even better.  
(CEO/013).



The Processes, I mean, it's a unique opportunity for looking back, reflecting and, if you like, reviewing what you have done. I think that's definitely necessary to reflect on the curriculum to make sure we are providing quality in our education. (SCH/026)

### Negative outcomes

The term 'negative outcomes' simply put, is the opposite of 'positive outcome'. A negative situation is the direct opposite of a positive situation when compared. For example a 'No' answer to a question is the opposite and negative of a 'Yes' answer to the same question.

In this present study, however, 'negative' does not refer to just the opposite of positive. It refers also to a condition other than or less than expected. Thus Negative outcomes in this study also refers to a state of affairs or state of things, some unsettling feelings, feeling of inconveniences or difficulties in connection with these Processes. Such difficulties may be due to the specific nature of the Processes and therefore, cannot be avoided. Or they may result from the act of implementing the Processes, in which case, they might be avoided by modifying or altering the procedures. The ensuing discussion deals with such issues to identify the negative outcomes for the Quality Assurance processes.

A number of respondents in this present study pointed out that the Processes cost much to run both in time and other resources. A lot of people complained about time being spent on the implementation process:

The Processes are time consuming. Time is the problem, not enough time to get it going. We make (set) goals for ourselves that are probably unrealistic. (SCH/029)

It is true we are given time-out to do this, but I also have other roles to perform . . . and the Quality Assurance takes up so much time. I have still got to do my own job. . . . I have a period after this and another

meeting to attend, and then somewhere along the line I have got to do all my normal work before school finishes.

(SCH/022)

They are naturally expensive to run- these processes- both in human and financial resources. It is time consuming for the staff of the CEO, the consultants and the schools. There is a lot of paper work in the Educational Audit, it is really a paper-driven process

(CEO/010).

Asked what could be some of the negative outcomes of the Processes, some respondents noted that they were taking up some extra time of the school ordinary work which make it difficult to achieve every goal set for the particular school season. A respondent who happened to be school Principal expressed some frustration thus:

They are costly exercises. The negative outcome about the Educational Audit in particular, is the high stress on the teachers. You have to, in a sense, nurse that stress in the whole staff for the rest of the school year. Once the teachers are at that level of stress, it takes ages for them to come back out of that. So, I can say that it is expensive in terms of emotional energy and the stress on the teachers.

(SCH/018)

Another respondent stated:

I don't know so much negative outcomes, but I guess the time factor... For instance, in the Educational Audit, there is a lot of pressure on the staff, a lot of forms to be filled in and children's work need to be displayed so that what is written in the program and policies can be verified. So the time spent on all that is enormous and I think a few people I spoke to in other schools do feel the same way

(SCH/032).

On the other hand, the difficulties or inconveniences may arise as accidents or contingencies by the very fact of implementing the Processes and therefore, unforeseen and unintended. In this dimension, also, respondents indicated that the implementation of the Processes placed extra demands on the schools staff and this caused over-work, stress and anxiety.

The negative side (which is accidental) of these Processes include

stress, over work, anxiety, mainly through poor management. It certainly is an extra demand on schools . . . it does become very stressful for many.  
(CEO/01)

It is obvious that the purpose of the Processes was not to deliberately give extra work to the teachers or stress any staff member of the CEO. What has been experienced and expressed in the responses are 'mere accidents', and mostly unintended.

Another respondent expressed the accidental outcome or difficulty thus:

In some way the Processes could be seen as a means of evaluating somebody. This could cause some concern or uneasiness for the individual because people are afraid of evaluation. It is not easy to go through a performance review and having everyone looking and talking about you.  
(SCH/023)

The negative outcomes of the Processes were again seen to be due to the attitude of the people involved in the implementation. As the implementation of the Processes involves some changes in structures, there would be segments of the staff who find it disturbing and unnerving. Some people are simply frightened of change and are opposed to change. So human conditions and human limitations can introduce negativity into issues, programs or processes. A respondent at the interview stressed this point thus:

Some people don't like a lot of structured planning. So, depending on their personality some people might find the Processes over-structured. Others who might have been coasting along for a while find it now quite demanding to have to be part of and implementing these Processes.  
(CEO/02).

In summary, therefore, the so-called 'negative outcomes' are to be seen as unintended, and yet, unavoidable consequences due to the very fact of implementation of the Processes. For instance, *stress, over-work, anxiety*, etc, were not intended, but they are unavoidably experienced by participants and stakeholders in the course of implementing the Processes. On the one hand, these negative experiences (outcomes) may be due to the

nature of the processes; on the other hand, they may be attributed to human conditions or human attitudes towards programs and processes of this kind. For such reasons, it would seem that the negative tendencies may never completely be eliminated the Quality Assurance Processes. Rather, it should be expected that through further hard work, constant reviews and refinement of the Processes as suggested by a number of respondents, it would be possible to minimise the tendency to these negative outcomes. One way to approach this might be to look at what other positive outcomes could possibly be achieved through these Processes, which is discussed in the next section.

### *Outcomes yet to be achieved through these Processes*

It was possible that there could be some expected outcomes that the Processes had not yet achieved for one reason or the other and a specific question was designed in the interview to obtain such information from the respondents. This section reports some statements or expressions that point to the shortcoming or suggestions on how to achieve the 'yet-to-be-achieved outcomes'.

A number of respondents offered some suggestions as follows:

About desirable outcomes not yet achieved, I would think that the teachers need to be a little more in charge of the SRD process. Also, positive feedback from the processes should be coming to the classroom teachers rather than just the schools and the principals. I don't think they are aiming the feedback at the right level yet.

(SCH/019).

I think the more positive thing or outcome is to increase classroom effectiveness. There is plenty of room to keep improving. (CEO/04).

I think my main dream, hope and vision is to make more impact on the classrooms. I think the real challenge for education administrator is to impact on how the teachers are teaching and how the kids are learning. So, one of our desirable outcomes yet to be fully achieved is to be able to influence the quality of teaching and learning and all that goes on in the classrooms.

(CEO/010).

Similar concern was expressed by another respondent who thought that the PPPR process for teachers (which has already been proposed by the CEO) was ever urgent. This would make the implementation of the Processes complete, and also achieve more. In this way the teachers, too, will have the opportunity to receive direct feedback for what they are able to do in the schools. A respondent expressed some concern in the following quote:

Teachers don't have the opportunity to prove themselves individually. There is no part of the Processes yet where they have got to prove themselves. Maybe when PPPR for teachers is in place, the Educational Audit could become the whole school thing  
(SCH/018).

The PPPR I think it is valuable. ...the teachers, they don't receive such benefit. Sometimes they don't receive any feedback, and they don't know what if they make any contributions. Their advice may be sought, but they don't know what happens after. They need the PPPR  
(SCH/023).

A further outcome needed to be achieved will be to remove the tendency of fear and anxiety from the minds of some of the Catholic teachers or school staff who were still thinking of the Processes in terms of the old form of inspection to find faults.

One of the respondents from the schools was keen to point out:

These Processes, - the idea is good, but they are threatening to some of us teachers, especially the Educational Audit. It means you are going through inspection process, and some of us don't like too much checking up on what we are doing. . . . (SCH/019)

This was not a dominant view, but the fact that it was mentioned at all, means that there is something 'yet to be achieved' in this regard or in this area in the implementation of the processes.

The present Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney are designed and aimed to identify, encourage and emphasise good and positive achievements. They are not aiming to give undue attention to mistakes or the down side of people and the system. Instead,

achievements are to be greatly acknowledged and celebrated as a means of affirming the achievers. Whether or not this has happened or is happening in the system, will become clearer later in the study.

In the next section the discussion focuses on the factors hindering or assisting effectiveness of the implementation of the Processes.

#### **6.4 The Effectiveness of the Implementation of the Processes**

The effectiveness of a program, a process or an instrument of any kind is usually judged in terms of the accomplishment of the specific objectives for which the instrument or program was designed. In this study and in this section, effectiveness is used in terms of the factors influencing the successful or unsuccessful implementation of the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney. A number of factors were found to be directly or indirectly assisting or hindering the effective implementation of these Processes. As in every other situation, different people would support these Processes for different reasons. Some would support because of a conviction that the Processes are good and desirable, and because they share the vision of the designers and believe that such Processes are necessary for ensuring quality. Others may just be involved in the Processes only because they must have to be done otherwise 'you lose your job or position.' All the different attitudes exhibited by the different agents or stakeholders constitute the factors that either assist or hinder the Effectiveness of the implementation of the Processes. The discussion that follows below is an attempt to identify these factors and show how they can influence the effectiveness of the Processes.

##### *Factors assisting the Effectiveness of the Processes*

Any practice or program that is based on research and supported by literature can rightly be said to be credible and feasible. The Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO are a product or the outcome of some good research, reviews of literature and based on some

well-known international practices in education management. They are also based on sound principles and philosophical underpinning (McNamara & Barrett, 1994; CEO, 1995). Thus the Quality Assurance Processes have been described by many of the respondents as credible, feasible and a practice with no hidden agenda. The approach to quality adopted by the CEO based on well researched information is also consistent with what is described as best practices the world over.

A respondent typically stated:

I think the Processes are credible and are based on management best practices  
(CEO/03).

The credibility and feasibility of the Processes constitute a key factor that is assisting the effectiveness of the implementation of the Processes in the first instance.

Through the various publications of documents, the CEO makes sure that there is consistency in the policy and management style. Thus in answer to the interview question: "What factors do you know that are assisting the effective implementation of the Processes?" a senior staff at the CEO replied that:

One factor is having a consistent approach to quality management. We have had a very consistent approach to Quality Assurance since 1990. The system-wide Strategic Management Cycle makes sure that the same thing is done at every place, at every school.

(CEO/010)

More so, the NSW State Education Reform Act (1990) and the Board of Studies require the CEO to maintain the consistency through the quality of the curriculum. This gives a new incentive or motivation to the CEO, and therefore, a reason to make sure that the Processes are properly and effectively implemented.

A respondent again confirmed this fact, particularly about the Educational Audit Process:

Focusing on the Educational Audit, I suppose what is assisting it is the fact that it is a law. Schools have to be inspected (audited) in some way. Secondly, our Secondary school students sit for the major exams

that are based on the syllabuses that the Board of Studies produces. So, it is not just that we have a legal backing, it is also that the teachers want the students to do well in the exams. (CEO/07).

By the process of *Meaning Condensation*, an analysis of the above quote shows that it contains a few unexpressed factors that could either assist or hinder the effectiveness of the implementation of the Processes.

First, the idea of Educational Audit would immediately bring to mind the notion of provision of resources and facilities at the schools or educational institutions. Adequate resources and facilities made available at the schools is more likely to enhance the quality of teaching and learning, while inadequate resources and facilities is more likely to do the reverse. In this circumstance, the presence of either of these conditions will be a factor either assisting or hindering the effectiveness of the Quality Assurance Processes. Respondents in this present study acknowledged that the CEO has made available adequate resources and guidelines for the effective implementation of the Processes, and hence they are assisting rather than hindering.

The CEO system fully supports the Processes by providing resources and putting out publications that can advertise and present the Processes in good light... Good press and efficient means of information contribute to the effectiveness of the implementation of the Processes (CEO/03).

Second, the need to follow the Syllabuses produced by the Board of Studies, and the desire or expectation that the students 'do well in the exams' are indicative of the need for accountability and quality outcomes. Any organisation or institution that has a culture or habit of accountability, that which Macpherson (1996, p. 86) describes as a "behavioural obligation . . . which, if properly discharged, would promote better outcomes . . .", is likely to meet the expectations of their various interest groups.

Other factors assisting the effectiveness of the Processes in this study were named to include the quality of people leading the implementation as well as the quality of software or hardware materials.



Another respondent expressed the idea thus:

The types of people who have led the Processes include very good calibre of consultants and external facilitators. In the same way, the materials that are produced including software, hardware and paper work are all of high quality. All these constitute the factors that assist the effectiveness of the Processes. (CEO/013).

The people who have been leading the Processes were further described by the respondents as 'being totally committed to the job and rich in experience.' Their wealth of experience and their ability to relate well with other people were seen as outstanding qualities and great assets to the system. These, therefore, constitute further factors that are assisting the effectiveness of the implementation of the Processes. These very highly experienced people were mostly named as the Consultants who were selected from among high profile former school Principals. Thus some of the respondents made statements such as:

They (Consultants) are all Principals who have been very experienced... All Consultants in this office have been Principals in at least two or three schools. So they are proven leaders . . . and they have been recruited and trained in the Processes and in leadership and in facilitating adult learning. (CEO/011)

The Consultants are all experienced former principals of schools. So, it does not take a lot of convincing for them to know what is required and how to handle issues in school management situations. (CEO/02).

I think that one important factor is the unequivocal commitment of the Executive Director of schools that they should happen... I think also the strong relationship between Regional Consultants and the principals has been second to this unequivocal commitment (CEO/05).

This factor flowed into yet another factor - effective leadership. A reference to the Table in **Appendix H** would confirm that almost every respondent named Effective Leadership as an important factor that assists the effectiveness of the implementation of the Processes. Respondents explained that it was important for the Principals of the schools

at which these Processes were being implemented to possess certain outstanding leadership qualities. For instance, the principals should have ability to manage a process such as the Quality Assurance Processes, ability to have and provide the vision, and especially, ability to invite and empower the entire school community to be part of the Processes. In particular, the SRD Process, which is a community-based Process, was more effective if/when the leadership involves the entire school community to take ownership of not only the Process, but also its implementation.

These quotes from two respondents represent the typical statements made by other respondents as they named or described this factor:

I think one important factor assisting in SRD, Educational Audit and the PPPR has been the schools taking very much control of the Processes; that it is us leading the Processes from within us, setting our own agenda for those Processes ... rather than having them imposed upon us.  
(SCH/030)

If teachers are not involved in the Processes to the extent that they have ownership of the processes, then there is little chance of them being effectively implemented. . . . We have got to try and work hard to ensure that there is ownership, there is commitment to it and that people are going to work carefully together to ensure those goals.  
(CEO/013).

Sharing of ideas, providing feedback on processes undertaken and information-exchange were also factors named as assisting the implementation of the Processes. Many respondents were of the opinion that interacting in this way does enhance acceptance and acknowledgment of persons. Where and when that acknowledgment is followed up by affirmation of persons and celebration of achievements, morale is boosted and motivation is enhanced. It is in this way that 'affirmation' becomes a factor assisting the effective implementation of the Quality Assurance Processes. Speaking on the issue of sharing of ideas and information, a respondent stated:

At the PPPR I work hard sharing with the people I supervise the positive experiences to encourage them to a similar approach to the Processes. In other Processes people should do the same.

(CEO/012).

Another assisting factor mentioned, was the idea of a common link with all the Processes. It was noted that all the Processes together aim at achieving quality teaching and learning through the 'Culture of Review and Development'. This singular 'aim' or 'purpose' provides a natural and original bond between them. The natural link arising from their common aim or purpose has been seen as a factor assisting the effectiveness of the implementation of the entire Processes.

A respondent noted this factor in the following quote:

The thing that helps is that all the bits of the jigsaw fit together- that PPPR, Contract Renewal, Educational Audit and the SRD are all part of a big jigsaw. They don't work against each other, they actually have been thought of as one package of Quality Assurance Process. So they don't fight against each other but they actually fit in. Now that really helps when you are trying to implement them, that things actually fit in and have the same philosophy behind them all.

(SCH/018)

The next section discusses the factors that are hindering the effectiveness of the implementation of the Processes.

### *Factors hindering the Effectiveness of the Processes*

Many of the respondents could name a few things that were hindering the effectiveness of the Processes. It was quite understandable that people blamed any form of difficulties experienced in the process on the fact that the Processes were new and still being experimented in some quarters. It is also possible that some of the factors hindering the Processes at present will disappear with time, but that was not the concern of this present study.

Some of the respondents opined that the general attitude people have towards change is regarded as a factor hindering the effectiveness of the Processes. It is in the nature of people to resist change because they feel threatened even when the particular change does not pose a threat. Two of the respondents spoke in the following terms about change:

I suppose it depends on people's attitude. Some people just have negative attitude towards things. Some may not feel part of the new idea/system even though, in SRD the ideas came from the staff as a whole.  
(SCH/015)

Change is slow and it takes time to develop a new mind set. It is really the mind that you have got to develop concerning a long-term whole system approach such as this one. There are many distractions due to many changes in education, and all this would hinder the effectiveness of the new Processes.  
(CEO/010)

Another respondent who saw change as a factor remarked thus:

People recognise change as threatening. It is seen as a criticising process instead of a supporting process, and people often see the down side and not the upper side. So, most people just resist change.  
(SCH/019).

The tendency to show apathy for new ideas was seen as another factor hindering the effectiveness of the processes. It was noted that some school principals were apathetic and pessimistic about the Processes when they were first introduced.

In a sense for some Principals they hoped that the stuff would have fallen off the edge and gone away after a while, and therefore, the Principals mightn't have had to deal with it. (CEO/03)

In another instance of attitude towards the Processes, a school Principal at the interview actually acknowledged being sceptical at the initial stage of the introduction of the Processes and stated:

I was a bit sceptical when I first heard about it. I was wondering how this might go, how successful the CEO would be. But now I think it's been very good.  
(SCH/023).

Surely such an initial approach or attitude could not but present a hindrance to the

effectiveness of the implementation of the Processes. It would inhibit, rather than enhance proper level of involvement and commitment, which are some of the necessary ingredients for the effectiveness of the Processes.

Information dissemination was also given as one of the factors hindering the effectiveness of the Processes. Some respondents (mainly from the schools) expressed the concern that they did not have enough information about the Processes, and they thought that it was not enough for the CEO to give information about the Processes to the schools through the Principals only.

You get people who are not really willing to get involved and this drags the program back. Another thing that is hindering them is the lack of information about them. In some places you talk about what we are doing, people don't have any idea what you are saying. I think every school should do it and that will make them more aware of the program or the process. (SCH/015).

I don't think that the information pack at the beginning was very good for the classroom teachers. And the feedback, because it was not uniformed, it was only partial feedback from people who were either unhappy or did not get it well, you get more negative ideas around the Processes. (SCH/019).

Some other respondents expressed concern about the use of the services of the Audit Resource Persons (ARPS) by the CEO in the Educational Audit program. They argue that the ARPS are not only inexperienced, but some of them are also fellow teachers going to examine or critique the work of fellow teachers. Moreover, they thought that the Educational Audit Process was being unnecessarily duplicated by using the ARPs, and this hinders the effectiveness of the implementation of the Process.

I must say, with the Educational Audit, the aspect that would not have been necessary would be the ARPs. I don't think they really need to come into the school. The Educational Audit Team should be sufficient... (SCH/030).

Some thought that the ARPs, which is made up of teachers from one school visiting another, had not the expertise and may turn out to be a witch hunt for some. So some school staff members were not only fearful of 'witch-hunting', but they were also reluctant to cooperate with a team whose competence and experiences are in doubt. That type of disposition was sure to hinder the effectiveness of the implementation of the Processes.

Staff are concerned, staff are reluctant. At the same time staff fear that they are going under the spotlight and they don't like to be examined.  
(CEO/07)

I think fear is a factor. Some people would have fear of the Processes even before they get involved in them.  
(SCH/014)

It was a common opinion expressed by the respondents of both categories that among the greatest factors hindering the implementation of the Processes were extra workload and the extra time involved to implement them. The excessive paper-work involved in the Educational Audit Process, in particular, was abhorred by almost all respondents, but these were blamed on lack of adequate funding.

There is huge workload on the Regional Consultants. They are the people who keep these Processes moving. We have limited funds for salaries, and that limits the number of people we employ.  
(CEO/04).

Teachers have told me, this has been the most stressful year in their professional lives. They found the Educational Audit exceptionally stressful; and these are not first-year-outs, they have been teaching for a long time.  
(SCH/018)

If you ask the people in the schools they will tell you that it is time consuming. I agree with that. I think the time they take in terms of preparation, and you know, the Ed. Audit there is a lot of paper work to do.  
(CEO/05).

With the Educational Audit . . . perhaps, the checklist needs to be modified. Parts of it was too artificial and it became a paper trail, and it wasn't necessarily meaningful paper trail (SCH/024).

Clark (1998) reports having found similar feelings expressed in the responses from the diversity of participants in his recent survey – *“From Strength To Strength”*. In one of his statements, Clark remarked:

One aspect of the Educational Audit was a major cause for concern. 66.3% of respondents agreed/strongly agreed that staff experienced unnecessary anxiety during the Educational Audit process...While there were many positive responses to the survey items, the prevalent thread in responses ... was that the whole process needed an overhaul. It was described as too demanding, too paperwork oriented, too time consuming and placing undue strain on schools, especially small schools (p. 22).

In another instance, some of the respondents from the school, particularly classroom teachers, did express concern and apparent disappointment in the Educational Audit reports/results. They claimed that the reports/results that come out usually failed to reflect their individuals' (teachers') efforts. Instead the Reports would all be on the whole school and nothing about the teachers who work so hard to make it all happen. In deed, Clark's (1998) report also indicated the feeling of disappointment by teachers in this area:

One disappointment registered was that teachers had put a great deal of themselves into the exercise, but received little feedback and so felt 'written out' at the individual level (p. 22).

The above quotes indicate similarities in the data obtained by both Clark's study and this present study. The similarities/commonalties that are evident in the data of the two independent studies, not only give credibility to both studies, but also point to the importance or gravity of those issues raised by the various participants or respondents, and should be addressed.

## 6.5 A collection of Major Perceptions about the Processes

Responding to the interview question which asked for the overall assessment of the Processes, the respondents were unanimous in stating that it was worthwhile implementing the Processes by the CEO. No respondent would like to see the Processes scrapped even when they clearly acknowledged some difficulties in the process of the implementation. It was the common impression by the majority of the respondents that with time and some review and refinement those difficulties would be cleared. Even those respondents who did not or could not offer any positive assessment, would not recommend that it be abolished, rather it should be refined.

I don't think it should be stopped, I think it should be refined to make it less stressful . . . the Educational Audit . . . and others. . . .  
(SCH/020).

The general impression from analysing the interviews is that a majority of the respondents thought that the implementation of the Quality Assurance Processes was the right way to go in the effort to ensure quality in the Catholic education system. While there were some reservations, these were only with regards to the detailing of the implementation procedures and not against the actual Processes.

To represent the general feel of how the respondents perceived the Processes, some select statements made at the interviews are quoted and organised or arranged in relation to the themes or issues they identify with.

### *Perceived as necessary and valuable Processes:*

It is good to have some sort of check; it is good for parents to know that there are regular checks going on of the schools their children are at. And it is good for the Principals to feel that it is not down to them only to monitor the schools - they have support in doing that.  
(CEO/07).

The idea is great and accountability is a big thing. I like the whole program. I was in the panel that put together the whole booklet that



shows the plan and direction for the few years. It takes a lot of time though, but the Processes are very worthwhile.

(SCH/017).

The processes of the CEO, Sydney have been designed and adopted by the System to put in place something as an outside assessment of the quality of services being offered in our schools. The Processes are meant for the validation of a large system.

(CEO/01).

I think having this kind of processes makes us feel part of the system, the Diocese, not just working in isolation. What is important about it is that, everybody is involved, and may have the opportunity to make their contribution. I think that is important.

(SCH/033).

I believe we have the best set of Quality Assurance Processes compared to all other school systems in terms of sharpening the curriculum, reflective practice and the changing school culture.

(CEO/03).

*Perceived as a source of confidence for the system and the people in it:*

To have the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO for us means that we are putting in place strategies to provide confidence for the community especially parents, that they can trust their children are receiving a good quality education in the schools they are at.

(CEO/02)

I think everyone is quite happy with the Processes, we are confident and we agree with the direction being given.

(SCH/018)

*Perceived as a means of review and reflection:*

I think one of the main things is that we become more reflective about what we are doing. These Processes promote professionalism among the Catholic Education/school staff.

(SCH/034).

The School Review and Development is really to encourage all schools to develop a culture of review. The SRD is an opportunity for schools to sit back and/take time out to look at the big picture and say,

where do we want to be after some time. The Contract Renewal is a process on leadership where the Principals are invited to reflect on their last period of contract.

(CEO/013)

*Perceived as accountability-based system of Processes:*

Our Quality Assurance Processes assist schools to shape their own direction and thereby be better accountable to the Church, the Government and the wider community. They are designed to help clarify the Mission and priorities of the CEO as well as the schools.

(CEO/03)

I think, once you have these processes in place, schools are more accountable. Accountability is most important. I can see the schools are accountable to the Principals and Coordinators. (SCH/017)

I am a believer in accountability. These Processes were introduced so that we may be accountable for the hundreds of millions of dollars each year from the Federal and State governments. There is . . . , we have agenda for pastoral care and curriculum dimensions. . . .

(SCH/024).

The truth is that we have got a clearly articulated system in place, we can be better accountable to all. . . . The government, the Church, even the parents, they require that we be accountable to them

(CEO/09).

*Perceived as community-based and community focused:*

Our Quality Assurance is not about measuring the number of things we do or the amount of money we generate. Our Quality Assurance is focused on the improved teaching and learning for the children and teachers - it is focused on people.

(CEO/04)

One good thing about SRD processes is that they give schools a format to follow. Everyone has opportunity to contribute to the development of the school through the Processes. The schools now have a development plan owned by their communities.

(SCH/033)

The outcome of the SRD is community based. The PPPR and perhaps all other Quality Assurance Processes are probably about sharing the story with other people, the story of outcomes for the purposes of improvement.  
(SCH/030)

*Perceived as an opportunity for gaining feedback and affirmation:*

Another positive thing about these processes is that they are affirming processes. They affirm what you are doing and tell you what you are doing well.

(SCH/016)

Its importance (that is the PPPR) is to affirm all the good that the Principal may have accomplished within that period of time, and help also to set direction for the future.

(CEO/013)

The PPPR gives you the chance to set some goals to keep learning. The whole process is about evaluating where one is and how one can improve on what one is doing - affirmation of yourself.

(SCH/029)

I very much like the individual Personnel Performance Planning and Review (PPPR) because it's very important that every employee has an opportunity to receive affirmation and to gain feedback about areas which may need further development.

(CEO/02)

*Perceived as too large a process and needing refinement:*

Perhaps we have had too many strategies, too many goals to implement over the period of time. Perhaps we need to make them more concise and cut down on them...

(SCH/031)

I think there's always a danger that processes such as these can become a bit...over-demanding and overly complicated. Unless they are simple, they are not helpful. I think the streamlining is important. If they are not streamlined and if they are not simple, that could be detrimental.

(CEO/02).

## 6.6 Other Common Opinions expressed by Respondents at the Interviews

There were some other issues or points in the study that needed consideration and interpretations. For example some respondents made statements that had double implications and needed to be placed in context for proper analysis and understanding.

Generally my assessment is that the Processes have been received very well. Having said that, I still believe they should be streamlined in the next round.  
(CEO/02)

An expression such as this would indicate or imply the signs both of weakness and strength in the entire economy of the Quality Assurance Processes. It could well be that the Processes were too large a program for the easy understanding of the particular stakeholders or clients. It could be that, the apparent confusion and uncertainty resulted from improper or inadequate means and manner in which they were introduced to the various stakeholders or clients. Or it may simply be a new idea and, therefore, not very familiar to all who are being involved in the process of implementation. Whichever is the case, the signs are that the Processes would need some closer look at or refinement by the designers if they must be effective and beneficial to the Catholic education system.

Similarly, there was concern about an apparent irregularity among schools about the procedures employed in the implementation of the Processes. It was noted that some schools, while implementing the SRD and Audit Processes were in some habit of “going over-board” to create some extra impression or to excel in the program to win applause from whomever it may concern to do so. Indeed, there were the respondents from the school who pointed to the practice as follows:

Staff, sometimes Principals or the executive of the schools, they take the opportunity to try to really sell the school and be over impressive... There are set down procedures but people being what they are, they tend to ignore the guidelines  
(SCH/014).

Another respondent said:

I think . . . it should not be taken as competition to show off. You should be able to display what your school is doing instead of getting too way-out. It gets bigger and bigger . . . because you want to impress others or out do other schools. Competition can be good and can be bad.  
(SCH/030).

Well, we teachers like to do all we can to be good. . . . If I am to produce this Religious Education program for instance, then do better than anyone else.  
(SCH/019)

Some of the senior staff members from the CEO also conceded during the interviews that in some schools the Principals do go far beyond the procedures and limits set for the proper and effective implementation of the Processes.

We also suffer a little from the tendency of some Principals to want to load the Processes up with a whole lot of their own personal agenda. The Principals in some cases have actually bolted on a whole lot of other expectations of their staff, and then stand back and say to their staff, 'look at what the CEO is doing to us' (CEO/03).

I think a lot of the staff have got very anxious about the Processes. In many cases they have over-prepared. They try to impress rather than just have all that is required. I think they have been under a lot of stress, most of which probably they have put upon themselves.  
(CEO/07).

This, they do in an attempt to score extra points in their leadership and administrative endeavours or positions. Clearly, such would always be at the expense of the teachers' time and efficient productivity. But the adverse effect is that such approach or attitude to the implementation of the Processes renders the latter ineffective and less likely to achieve the desired goals.

This could well be part of the reasons why many (particularly teachers) at the interviews complained and described the Processes as "stressful, time consuming and something needing refinement", a general complaint coming from the schools and acknowledged by the CEO.

### 6.7 Summary

In this chapter, attention was focused on the discussion of the salient issues that arose in all the interviews conducted for the project. With the interview responses, it was possible to determine the various perceived notions of the respondents about the Nature, Outcomes and the Effectiveness of the implementation of the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney. Through the discussion it was possible to identify the factors as well as the sources of the factors that assist, and the factors as well as the sources of the factors that hinder the effectiveness of the implementation of the Processes. It was discovered that some of those factors were inherent in the very nature of the Processes, while others were attributed to accidental causes due to circumstances surrounding the implementation procedures.

Apart from being reviewing and reflective procedures, it is expected that Processes will instil a (habit) *Culture of Review and Development* into the system as well as the individuals. If that culture of *Review and Development* truly becomes a 'habit' or (culture), it is expected that the Reviews and Development procedures or mechanisms will become influenced by such a 'culture', a 'habit' or 'way of doing things'. When that happens, there is every likelihood that those hindering factors will be minimised or absolved into that 'culture' or 'habit' with time. It is this double-sided advantage that makes these Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO significant and desirable.

The analysis of the interview has revealed strengths and weaknesses, positive and negative outcomes, as well as the variously expressed and interpreted opinions of the significant stakeholder groups about these Processes. Apart from what are presented in this text under the headings: *Collection of Major Perceptions (6.5)* and *Other Common Opinions (6.6)*, the results of the overall analysis of all the Main Study interviews are summarised and presented as **Appendix H 1-3**

In the next and final chapter, the evaluation, conclusions and recommendations based on the findings from the study, as well as suggestions for future research, are presented.

## **CHAPTER SEVEN**

### **EVALUATION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

In Chapters Six the results of the data analysis and the discussions from the Main Study interviews were presented. The perceptions of the various respondents about the Nature, Outcomes and Effectiveness of the Processes were determined through a critical analysis of the various statements and expressions. The analysis and the discussions addressed the opinions expressed by the respondents within the limits of the available data and within the scope of this present project. It was also possible to verify the overall assessment of the entire package from the various respondents.

In the present chapter, the evaluation of the study, the conclusions arrived at, and some recommendations towards a future and more effective implementation of the Quality Assurance Processes are presented. The recommendations also include some suggestions for further research that could be carried out in this and related topics in this area.

## THE EVALUATION

### 7.1 The System Processes

In nearly every part of the world, in the business and manufacturing sectors, as well as in the education sector, the management practice of quality assurance is becoming increasingly an acceptable and, indeed, a necessary management strategy for regular self-review to enhance development and accountability in the systems and organisations. While the business and manufacturing industries have long been used to both the terminology and the practice of 'Quality Assurance', it was evident in the review of literature and in the interviews that schools and educational institutions have only recently started to apply this terminology in describing what they do to achieve and maintain quality outcomes in the education sector. By all standards, there have not yet been sufficient major studies concerning the 'Quality Assurance Process' as far as its practice or implementation in the education sector is concerned. In fact, available studies and the literature have revealed that there is some confusion, and some degree of debating going on about how the term could be applied in the education sector. There has not yet been a common agreement on what this term should mean if it is adopted as a management practice in the education sector (see Chapter 2). It was for the above and similar concerns that the present researcher undertook to study this topic in some depth, especially as it relates to the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO Sydney.

The CEO, Sydney, first introduced its current form of 'Quality Assurance Processes' in mid-1975 aimed at enhancing development and accountability in the system. Prior to this, there was the Contract Renewal (for lay persons), or the Review Consultation Process (in the case of members of Religious Orders) which was applied to those in Executive positions, such as the CEO senior staff and the school Principals. The Personnel Performance Planning and Review (PPPR) which was extended to include persons in the CEO system, and now is being extended to the teachers at the school level. To complement all this and after series of consultations, the School Review and



Development (SRD) was introduced in 1993 as a process by which each school clarifies its mission and develops a Strategic Management Plan (Clark, 1998, p. 2; see also the report on Chapters 1 & 2 of this project).

This study was not out to prove or disprove any theory or hypothesis. The project set out to study and analyse all the processes that constitute the component parts of the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney. The design of the study was to analyse the perceptions of significant stakeholders about the Nature, Outcomes and Effectiveness of an already existing set of Processes. Clark (1998, p. 3) has pointed out that these Processes “. . . are not up for re-negotiation as there is an explicit long-term commitment to . . .” involving the CEO and the various stakeholder groups. This, however, does not mean that the Processes are not subject to modifications or some major changes where and when necessary. In fact, in terms of the system processes, the opposite would be the case, since (as the present study and Clark’s study have revealed) the Processes are still in the early stages of their implementation. This also explains, in part, why research on this topic are relatively few at present.

At the time of data collection for this project, there were still some Catholic Systemic schools that had not yet implemented the Processes and the teachers’ PPPR was only at the pilot state. At the time this final report was being written (June 1999), it was evident from recent interviews and discussions with the CEO senior staff members, that almost all of the 151 schools in the system had been through Cycle 1 of the SRD and the Educational Audit Processes, and were preparing to embark on Cycle 2 in the year 2000.

In a further development, information available to this researcher indicated that the pilot PPPR at the teacher level failed because it was ill-timed and the participants were ill-prepared (Interim Report on Teachers PPPR pilot program, 1998). Plans were on the way to re-introduce the Teachers PPPR when necessary, and when the system corrected possible errors. This study made some recommendations with regards to a successful implementation of the Teachers’ PPPR as will be shown later.

Judging by the way these Processes developed (from a personnel appraisal program), the differences in the level of awareness manifested in the level of expressions between the two categories of respondents, are understandable. Nevertheless, there exist differences, which might be in the nature of the Processes, due to ineffective communication, or due to some other unidentified issues. To achieve the effectiveness of the Processes, that space between the categories of respondents must be addressed.

Almost all those interviewed in this project had directly or indirectly, stressed the importance of accountability in the whole school system. They also attested to the fact that this was being achieved through the implementation of the Processes. The goal to be accountable not just to the Governments, but also to the Church, the parent community of the schools, and the wider society, received a 'resounding nod of the head' from most of the respondents. In this respect, the system Process received a general acceptance and approval by the majority of the respondents (see report in Appendix H). Thus, even those who could not demonstrate their clear awareness and understanding for the operations and implementation of the Processes, (see Chapter 5), and would not normally approve of them or be involved in them (should they have a choice), did so, because they believed that the Processes can enhance development and accountability in the school system.

On the one hand, there was the acknowledgment by the respondents that these Processes were made user-friendly through the activities and the leadership of the Consultants, facilitators and the support from the central and regional administration of the CEO. This acknowledgment fits in with the shared responsibilities of the officers in the CEO:

The Regional Consultant with delegated authority from the Executive Director of schools, through the Regional Director, . . . assist the Principal and school community in shaping the future direction of the school consistent with the Archdiocesan vision and system priorities . . . (CEO, 1994, p. 20).

On the other hand, there was consistency in the call for the simplification and

streamlining of the Educational Audit in particular, to reduce the bulk of paper-work involved in the present format. Some pointed out that even the word 'Audit' was believed to present a threat to some teachers and add to their stress:

Some of the teachers are frightened of the whole idea of auditing, even the mere words . . . it's like the old idea of inspection. I think they should do something . . . I don't know what! (SCH/016).

The concern expressed here finds a parallel with what Professor MacBeath said about the highly technical terms used in describing the Quality Assurance Processes (Clark, 1998, p. 37). MacBeath believes that the terminologies "are not easy to follow", and suggests that they be simplified for better understanding and effective application. The truth is that, there are some difficulties in understanding some of the terms used in describing the Processes because they are not, and need not be in the language of a 'lay person'. Care must be taken, however, not to make them too simplistic, otherwise the true significance might be jeopardised.

While no one came up with any concrete suggestion or recommendation on how to go about the modifications, the call for simplification of the Processes was loud and consistent, indicating that the concerns need to be addressed. It is hoped that some of the recommendations in this study will be helpful in this respect.

In the next section the evaluation focuses on the methodology and the design adopted for this study.

## **7.2 Evaluation of the Design & Methodology used in the Study**

It was decided to use interviews as the main source of data collection in this study. The reasons for this choice of methodology, as well as the choice of participants, were explained in the Chapter Three. The face-to-face interview situation made it possible for the researcher to have a close (one-to-one) encounter with each of the respondents. The researcher also judged this method as suitable and effective because it provided the

opportunity to clarify any ambiguities or misunderstandings that may have arisen in the interview schedule.

One of the procedures involved in the design and methodology for this present study was the decision to send the interview transcripts back to the respondents for approval before using the data for this study. This procedure was very enriching to the study because the respondents had an opportunity to confirm or alter what they had said during the actual interviews. Respondents also had another chance to continue in their role as participants in the study, and were invited to freely approve or disapprove of the use of the materials by the researcher. This approach was also an effective way of enhancing the validity of the interviews and the data collection in the study. The transcription of all 35 interviews resulted in over 500 typed-pages of materials. However, following the withdrawal of one of the participants, 34 of these interviews were eventually used in the project.

Overall, the design and methodology employed in this study proved effective and suitable.

The evaluation of the attitudes and reactions of the respondents towards the project is presented in the next section.

### **7.3 Evaluation of Attitudes and Reactions of the Respondents**

In general, the respondents appeared keen and willing to express their views about the Processes. Comparatively, respondents from the CEO category sounded more convincing and were more articulate in their responses than those from the school category. Coming down the ladder, Principals and Assistant Principals were more fluent than the classroom teachers as they talked about the PPPR, the Educational Audit aspect of the SRD and the CR/RC Processes. Classroom teachers were more familiar with the SRD and Educational Audit than they were with other processes. Many of them, however, did not seem to know the links between these Processes nor did they understand some of the terms such as the

Quality Assurance used to express the goals of the Processes.

Overall, the attitude of the respondents towards the whole idea of Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney can be described as positive and supportive. They were enthusiastic and optimistic about the expected positive outcomes of the Processes. Most respondents appreciated being invited to be part of the project and regarded this as an opportunity to share their experiences and contribute to this project in particular, and research in general.

However, there were a few concerns, uncertainty or dislike manifested in the attitudes of some respondents. For instance, there were some respondents who were pre-occupied with what implications the project might have on their employment, and demanded more explanation. In one particular case, the respondent actually wanted to be sure that the interview report was not going to be given to the Executive Director or the Principal.

Also, it was observed that nearly all the respondents from the CEO were more inclined to show the positive sides of the Processes than were those from SCH. This inclination was manifested in various ways including the tone of voice and body language of the respondents. While it is not unusual, such a situation raises concerns about possible internal conflict in the understanding and implementation of the Processes by the two different categories of respondents and, those they represent. It is likely that the people at the CEO administrative level are experiencing the impact of the Processes differently from the people at the schools levels. It is also possible that the bureaucratic nature of the CEO may be forcing the Processes 'down the throat' of the schools, such that the former becomes insensitive to difficulties encountered by the latter. In that case, it would imply that the respondents from CEO were merely 'toeing party line' in their assessment of the Processes.

These tendencies would be at variance with the very nature, goals and significance of the Quality Assurance Processes, and must not be allowed to happen. As Clark, (1998) has

advised, it is important to make sure that the “Processes are implemented in a shared and collaborative manner, rather than an imposing manner; that they are empowering, rather than deskilling to those involved in them” (pp. 38-39). This approach is to be recommended not only for the CEO, Sydney, but also for all organisations that are adopting or planning to adopt the management practice of Quality Assurance Processes. The Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney were designed to provide opportunities for people in the Catholic education system to improve and develop themselves. These Processes emerged from among the people as a result of consultations and collaborative discussions. Consequently, the people or the communities own the processes, hence cannot be described as an imposition from the top management.

In the next section the evaluation considers the rationale and the value for the adoption of the term ‘Quality Assurance’ by the Catholic education system.

#### **7.4 The Term ‘Quality Assurance’**

The term Quality Assurance was an adaptation from what had been commonly and dominantly the language of business and manufacturing industries. The CEO found this a convenient term to explain what it has in place as a measure for ensuring quality in the Catholic school system in Sydney. Before now the CEO had an appraisal and review system which was not called ‘Quality Assurance’. A number of respondents made statements that confirmed this point and indicated why the CEO found the term necessary and convenient to apply to its Processes.

History shows that back in the 1970s and 1980s the CEO Sydney had what was called ‘performance appraisal’ for school Principals (see Chapter One). At that level, however, the main focus was on the selection, appointment and re-appointment of Principals, and the Assistant Principals, with little or no thought about the welfare of the schools themselves. However, towards the end of the 1980s, some school Principals began to reason that while the appraisal process was a good idea, it did not go far enough to solve

some of the many problems they were facing in the schools. Consequently, they requested that the CEO design a similar process that could assist them to critically review and reflect on the whole school work.

Meanwhile, at the State level the NSW Education Reform Act (1990) proposed legislation on the school curriculum. As a result, the CEO was given the choice and the privilege to produce an accountability process that meets government requirements for Registering and Accrediting Catholic schools, and consequently, qualify for government funding. This was a sort of “external demands for change . . . offering opportunities for internal development” (West, 1998, p. 771), which added to the incentive and motivation for CEO to undertake the design and implementation of the Processes.

A number of respondents from the CEO (none from the SCH) actually confirmed that some *external push* contributed to the ‘*internal development*’ of (designing) the Processes. Interview quotes to this regards were presented at the analysis sections (see Chapters Five & Six).

On the wider scene, it is evident from the review of literature (see Chapter 2) that there is increasing demand for accountability and guarantee for quality in education, particularly across the Western world. This is bringing extra pressure on schools and educational institutions, obliging them to be accountable for the quality outcomes of the education they provide on behalf of the society. As Cuttance (1998) has noted, “quality assurance approaches to school review and improvement are now a core element of State and Government school systems in many parts of the world” (p. 1135). Corder, Horsburgh and Melrose (1999) also make the point when they note that as a result of new requirements for accountability “quality (has) moved from a somewhat peripheral concern to have a central focus in the assessment of ‘accountability’ of higher education institutions . . .” (p. 101). Educational institutions and schools are, therefore, encouraged to design and implement some procedures that can demonstrate to the public that, quality outcomes are the aims and goals of such schools and educational institutions. All this sort

of demand, obligation or pressure from different interest groups also constitute the factor that influenced the CEO, Sydney, to design and adopt a suitable procedure for ensuring quality in the Catholic schools system.

It was within this context, therefore, that the CEO took up the challenge to design what has now developed into the current Quality Assurance Processes. The time was right for the CEO to design the Processes in order to meet the Government requirements; the *climate* was right because the schools community (through the Principals) actually requested for the Processes; and the *adoption of the term* was right and timely because it explains the modern day management philosophy and practice in the education sector.

In the next section, the various conclusions reached in the study are presented.



## THE CONCLUSIONS

In this section the conclusions reached in the study are presented. In order to remain consistent and enhance understanding, it was considered appropriate to report on the various conclusions under the headings: *Nature, Outcomes and Effectiveness of the Processes*, which constitute the main items in the title of the project.

### 7.5.1 Conclusions reached on the Nature of the Processes

The *nature* of the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney can best be understood, explained or described in terms of what they are designed to achieve and how they achieve those goals. Earlier in this work the different components of these Processes were individually identified as:

- School Review and Development (SRD) Process;
- Educational Audit Process;
- Personnel Performance Planning and Review (PPPR) Process; and
- Contract Renewal/Review Consultation Process.

It is important to note here, that these are not *four different ways* of doing the same thing. Rather they are *four different things* to be done in a similar way, and for the achievement of a single or common goal, namely: -quality outcome. These Processes could be described as being 'multi-purpose' in *nature*. It is a package of processes that have a link with each other in terms of goals or outcomes. Among the critical issues that emerged from the study was how to recognise where, when and how these Processes are connected or linked to one another. The significance of this link and its implications for the *nature* of the entire processes are addressed in subsequent sections of this Chapter.

The Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO Sydney are basically about making sure that quality standards are achieved and maintained in the school system. From the findings of this present study, it has become clear that these Processes are about making sure that there is regular and positive development and improvement in the entire Catholic school

system in Sydney. Such targets for development and improvement are designed to be achieved through the regular and systematic reviews of the system structures, and the appraisal of the personnel in the system.

However, to help the reader appreciate the conclusions reached on the nature of the Processes, it was necessary to view and explain the meaning of the term 'Quality Assurance Processes' both in theory and in practice.

In theory, the Quality Assurance Processes may be described as 'measures' or 'strategies' designed by the CEO, Sydney, to help keep the schools and the system focused on the main objectives, goals or aims in education, and also to ensure the achievement of those, aims, goals and objectives. These sets of processes are put in place to ensure quality outcomes in teaching and learning in the Sydney Catholic schools system.

In practice, those engaged in these Processes develop shared understandings about the objectives, the goals or aims for their involvement in education, as well as formulate the strategies required to take them where they want to be in terms of quality education. It is also the common practice in production or service industries that people constantly work out better ways to bring about quality outcomes or ensure that quality is actually occurring. Such attitudes or practices enhance, not only the development of the industries or institutions themselves, but also the professional development of the individual persons who are involved in the institutions.

Although the term Quality Assurance was not originally in everyday use in the Catholic schools system in Sydney, it was evident from the interviews that the term was fast becoming familiar among the respondents from the CEO. However, such could not be said of the school staff members. Instead, it was evident from the interviews that a lot of those in the schools were yet to become aware of the existence of the term, let alone being familiar with its application. While quality standards are not new issues in Catholic education, and while most teachers would readily appreciate the individual Processes

such as the SRD or PPPR, the term 'Quality Assurance Processes' was still taking some time to be appreciated by most people in the schools as a new concept during the five years of the first Cycle. The designers, (the CEO Sydney), will have to work harder to sell the idea and further explain the aims, goals and the philosophy underpinning this package of processes as they embark on Cycle Two of the implementation.

The conclusions reached in this section can be summed up in the following few sentences. The Quality Assurance Processes have been designed for and expected to help keep the CEO and the schools focus on their main objectives. They are to help put in place some strategies that can help achieve the desired outcomes from Catholic education which include, above all, regular review of the schools, the system and the individuals involved in the system, with the view to making sure that there is accountability for the various interest groups as well as the professional development of the individuals. The Processes provide the channel and, by their very nature, they are the channels through which the CEO and the Catholic systemic schools in Sydney are accountable to the various clients or stakeholders groups, such as the church, the government, the parents, students and the wider community. In this regard these Processes are known and described as channels of accountability and development. Thus, it is concluded that the *Nature* of these Processes is described/defined *in* and *through* their functions, namely: *development and accountability*

#### 7.5.2 Conclusions reached regarding the Outcomes of the Processes

The implementation of the Processes has inculcated and encouraged a culture of *Review and Development* in both the schools and the individual staff in the Catholic education system in Sydney. As remarked by a number of the respondents, Catholic schools are becoming more accountable to the Government, the Church, the parents and the wider society. It was evident from this study that the SRD process has led to the formulation and publication of Vision Statements and Mission Statements by individual schools. Although the SACS Board and CEO always had some standard Vision Statement and the

Mission Statement providing the reasons and intentions why the Church establishes schools, it is the implementation of the Quality Assurance Processes that has provided opportunities for reviewing and reflecting on what constitute the Vision and Mission statements.

In much the same way, the review/reflections shape the way those issues affect the diverse nature of the present society in which the school system operates. This makes it possible to take steps towards the achievement of the quality outcomes that fit the aims and purposes of the Church (Crosby, 1984; Fields, 1993).

Those schools that have implemented the SRD now have a well-articulated plan to guide them for a four-year period of school management. Generally, such plans indicate the goals that the schools set for themselves for the next four years, and how they work towards achieving the goals they set for themselves. The schools have developed the habit of dialogue with the communities about what is important and valuable in the education of their children. As it were, there has been a change of culture in schools from what used to be a lack of involvement to a new culture of 'community involvement in policy development of the schools' as a result of the implementation of these Processes.

The Educational Audit Process provides the opportunity for the schools staff members to show their professional abilities. The items are to be recommended and/or acceptable by the Board of studies and are to be in accordance with the government requirements. It is the staff members who collect and make certain of what are the adequate and proper items for education practices. It is in taking part in the Educational Audit process that schools have the opportunity to 'stop' to think and 'review' the facilities and the curriculum, and reflect on the professional standards for their staff members.

Likewise, the PPPR process provides the individuals with an opportunity to set or name their goals for a year and have someone to guide them through their mapped out route. It provides time for the individual to reflect on what he or she has achieved or what to

achieve for the future. While the PPPR is basically a self-evaluation process, most respondents who recommended that it be continued acknowledged the role of mentors. There was hardly any person who had experienced the PPPR that did not find it very useful. The Process is about identifying areas of development and committing one's self to them with the support of a mentor or supervisor.

Overall, the general outcome of these Processes has been the emergence of the strategic set of priorities developed in both the CEO system and in the individual schools. It is from that the basic ingredient for the Strategic Management Cycle for the CEO and the schools are derived. The CEO as a system has the central Strategic Management Cycle, but the schools also develop their own strategic set of priorities that are to be validated and affirmed by the CEO as well as by the school communities. One advantage of having the strategic set of priorities is that every action or change initiative that is to occur in the school can be examined against the strategic priorities, before it is embarked on. In that way the change initiative would in effect, be kept within control and, therefore, consistent with the *mission* and *vision* of the particular school community. Consistency and compliance with set down rules and determined standards are among the basic ingredients that can ensure quality in an organisation. It is important, and appropriate, that the CEO, Sydney should have a system of the Quality Assurance that is consistent and regular if it wants to ensure quality in the Catholic schools system.

### 7.5.3 Conclusions reached on the Effectiveness of the Implementation of the Processes.

The effectiveness of the implementation of the Processes depend on a number of factors. These factors were identified and analysed in details in the previous Chapter and are only presented here in summary.

### *Factors assisting the Processes*

'Good leadership' practice was among the common factors identified by most respondents as assisting the implementation of the Processes. The respondents acknowledged that they were receiving good leadership and direction from the Central and Regional administrations of the CEO in the implementation of the Processes. While none of them was able to explain further, the meaning and the use of the expression '*good leadership*', it was clear that the respondents were referring to the leadership by the CEO, Sydney in the implementation of the Processes. Fields (1994) has pointed out that good leadership practice helps people find their own way to lead or change themselves. The Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney will have achieved one of its goals if people are helped to acquire 'good leadership practice' with the strategic procedure put in place. It was, therefore, significant to note and conclude that a majority of the respondents from both the schools and the CEO had recognised this item (good leadership) as a factor assisting the effective implementation of the Processes.

Also, the good publicity given to the Processes, both by the system and by the schools that have already implemented them provides the encouragement for other schools to take an interest in embarking on their own implementation. Above all, the Processes are a necessary and timely intervention in today's context whereby schools and educational institutions are threatened by the current wave of change in our society. Without the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Catholic schools would be operating in confusion and without some clear direction to follow in their education program. The present Processes have the ability to offer clear directions for the schools works the through regular reviews and assessments of all the resources available in the schools. This point is the real attraction to committed leaders in the Catholic schools. It was presented by most of the respondents as a key factor that is assisting the effectiveness of the Quality Assurance Processes.

### *Factors hindering the Processes*

On the negative side, there are a number of factors hindering the implementation of the Processes. These include the lack of proper awareness and understanding of the Processes by the majority of the stakeholders in the Catholic education system; the tendency for people to doubt and suspect the introduction of any new system in a program or process; and the extra work and stress associated with the implementation of these Processes. Perhaps one of the greatest factors hindering the effective implementation of the Processes has to do with the change of mind-set. It is difficult to change people's mind that had been made up or set on a particular issue or program to a new one. The implementation of these Processes requires some degree of culture-shift from the old to the new, not only in the system but also among the individuals involved in the system. This is yet to be achieved and therefore, remains a hindrance to the effective implementation of the Processes.

A number of respondents from the schools category expressed concern about *overwork*, *stress* and *anxiety* that they said are generally associated with the Educational Audit Process. School Principals and other members of the executive are confronted with the extra task of having to “nurse” and “counsel” the stressed teachers for some time before the latter recover enough to get back to class (see interview analysis in Chapter 5). These, and such other complaints were identified as some of the factors hindering the effectiveness of the Processes in general, but in particular, the Educational Audit.

The next section offers some recommendations aimed at eliminating some of the factors that hinder the implementation of the Processes, and improving upon those factors that are assisting the implementation of the Processes.

## THE RECOMMENDATIONS

### 7.6 Introduction

Evidence from the data analysis as well as the discussions contained in Chapters Five and Six of this study show that there was an overall positive feeling among the respondents concerning the entire Quality Assurance Processes. Although the number of people and the percentage of positive statements were not quantitatively presented, it was still possible to derive from the data analysis that an overwhelming majority of the respondents had positive perceptions about the Processes. There has been no evidence throughout interviews to show that any respondent suggested the dropping or even suspending the implementation of the Processes. The recommendation, therefore, is that, overall, the Quality Assurance Processes as practised by the CEO Sydney should remain in place.

However, it was evident from the interviews that some aspects of these Processes need to be re-examined or refined to enhance greater understanding and achievements. It was evident that the origin and foundation of the Processes have not yet been clearly understood by some of the key players of the Processes. While the efforts by the CEO in this regard must be commended so far, it is to be noted that much more needs to be done to promote greater awareness and understanding of the Processes. Accordingly, the present study offers a number of short-term and long-term recommendations which, if considered, will enhance effective implementation and, therefore, more positive outcomes of the Processes. A number of suggestions for future research on this topic are also offered.

To evaluate these recommendations presented in this study, further consultations and interviews were held with relevant persons from among those who participated in the main study interviews. Sanders (1994) has made the point that the “qualitative analysis



involves a process whereby the evaluators (can) return to relevant audiences and data sources to confirm and/or expand the purposes of the evaluation and test conclusions” (p. 171). In this study, the ‘relevant audiences’ included: the Executive Director of schools; two senior members of the staff in the CEO; and two school principals in Sydney Catholic systemic schools. These agreed with most of the recommendations and suggestions, and their contributions and suggestions (including any objections) are incorporated in the overall report in this section. These recommendations and suggestions, therefore, reflect the views and opinions expressed by the respondents at the interviews. At the same time, they are based on the ideas derived from the literature, as well as, examples from other education systems.

As well as grouping the recommendations under *short-term* and *long-term*, they are further split into sub-headings that are consistent with, and correspond to the different components of the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney.

## **7.7 Short-term Recommendations for SRD, PPPR and Ed. Audit Processes**

### **7.7.1 Recommendation for the SRD Process**

In general it was found that almost all respondents expressed their support for the SRD Processes and perceived it as a very significant developmental program for schools in the Archdiocese. However, some of the respondents in this present study expressed concerns that Principals in some schools adopt some unconventional approaches to the implementation of the Processes. For instance, a number of respondents noted with concern that some schools/Principals added or introduced what could be described as “their personal or private agendas” to the SRD Process, making the latter larger and more demanding for teachers than was intended or designed by the CEO. Where such a situation exists it must be seen as a serious threat to the effective implementation of the Process. It indicates that there are people (in the schools) who are not quite clear about the nature of the Process and what are the expectations of the SRD Process. It suggests

that there is ever the need for the CEO to re-state the nature of the Processes and their intended goal(s). In view of the above, it is recommended that:

*Recommendation 1.*

The SRD process be retained, but the CEO regularly re-states the nature and objective of the SRD, and clarifies the implementation procedures for schools.

The views expressed in Vallence and Wallace (1993) about school reviews and evaluation processes are in line with the need to strengthen and improve a process through regular and sustained reviewing of such a program. To retain and regularly restate the objectives of the SRD will strengthen the Process and enhance greater outcomes for the next Cycle.

*Recommendation 2.*

The schools and Principals be more effectively directed and supervised in the implementation of the Processes so that there is no introduction of any extra or personal agendas that could unnecessarily enlarge the Processes.

In implementing *Recommendation 2* care must be taken to ensure that the supervision does not inhibit initiative or stifle flexibility in the schools or the Principals. Instead, the participating schools or the individuals should be assisted to be actively and freely involved in the implementation. While supervision may not be totally avoided, greater emphasis should be laid on fostering the 'culture of self-review' and 'self-improvement' through trust and support, rather than through external inspection or direction. Such an approach to *Recommendation 2* with emphasises on active participation, would result in what Muller and Funnel (1991) describe as an activity '*done by*' the school community rather than '*done to*' the school (p. 10).

When the Processes are in a '*done by the schools*' situation, it means that the staff members are the key players in the implementation procedures. They are most likely to regard the processes as part of their commitments, and therefore, accept and appreciate their responsibility to the implementation.

On the other hand, when they are '*done to the schools*', the staff members are likely to remain strangers to the processes and may inadvertently become the subject of the review or inspection exercise. Such a situation would increase the stress, tension and anxiety among such staff members as they attempt to implement the Quality Assurance Processes. Where such conditions prevail, the Processes are likely to be less user-friendly and can hardly develop into a culture of self-review.

In another instance, some respondents remarked that the implementation of the SRD Process took the nature of 'a-one-off-thing' and appeared to be treated as "one of those events that are to be done away with" once and for all. To approach the Process in this way, does not enhance the development of a 'culture', it is just a momentous action. Therefore, it is recommended that:

*Recommendation 3.*

The SRD process be spread through the school calendar year such that an aspect of the Process is performed each Term to integrate it into the entire school life.

Most often the implementation of the SRD results in a publication or documentation that contains the recommendations for the school development program as well as the Mission Statement. Some respondents expressed disappointment that in some schools such publications were abandoned on the bookshelf, and the recommendations contained therein were not being applied to the daily life of the school. While there was not much evidence to show that this was a wide-spread practice among the schools, the fact that it was mentioned at all raises concern and some line of action aimed at arresting or correcting such an attitude needs to be considered. With regards to this, it is recommended that:

*Recommendation 4.*

The CEO and individual schools ensure that the Mission Statement and any other documentation resulting from the SRD process are adequately applied and adopted in the strategic management plan of each school.

There was no intention in this study to compare activities according to Regional arrangements. However, during the interviews, quite a number of respondents expressed concern that sister schools within a Region or across the Regions had no opportunity of sharing or comparing notes of their successes or failures on SRD process. Only one school Principal reported having a chance-meeting and discussion with another Principal about the SRD process they had just completed at their different schools. They both found out that they used different approaches to the implementation, but they did not get to find out why their approaches were different, which approach was more successful and why. Such an insight will further enhance the effective implementation and more quality outcomes of the SRD process. It is recommended that:

*Recommendation 5.*

Schools be encouraged to share their experiences and outcomes of the Processes within their neighbourhood and across the regions, and that the CEO critically evaluates any alternative procedures by any school with a view to adopting the positive elements contained therein.

The sharing could be done through organised exchange visits to the schools as well as by the exchange of some published documents.

Some of the respondents attributed the successful outcomes and the effectiveness of the Processes to the fact that the implementation procedures provide for the involvement of all stakeholder groups. This further emphasises the point about *community involvement* in the implementation of the Processes. The respondents suggested that more involvement of the community be encouraged in order to ensure more positive outcomes and effectiveness of the Processes. To adopt this approach will enhance shared responsibility and delegation of power, and the individuals can take ownership of their day-to-day activities (Muller and Funnel, 1991). At the same time, such an approach enhances accountability to the individuals in the system and to both the manager and the managed. Seeing how important this factor is to the successful and effective implementation of the

SRD process, it is recommended that:

*Recommendation 6.*

The CEO continues to emphasise the need for the entire school community (including the parish in which the school is situated) to be involved in the SRD process, and thereby take ownership and responsibility for the outcomes of the process.

*7.7.2 Recommendations for the PPPR*

In general, almost all those interviewed who had experienced the PPPR in any form, commended the Process and advised that it not only be retained, but also be extended to every staff member in the schools. There was minor concern about the attitude with which some people approached the Process. It was observed that a small minority of those participating in the PPPR, did so, not because they were convinced of the needs of the Process, but because, they put it, 'the CEO wants it'.

Accordingly, it is recommended that:

*Recommendation 7.*

The PPPR Process be retained but, the participants undertake it freely and willingly, because they are convinced of its aims and goals, and not because it is mandated by an authority, or imposed by the hierarchy.

While there was not much concern raised at the interviews about the PPPR, based on this 'minority' attitude towards the Process, the present researcher believes that a note of caution should be offered for the future of the Process in one particular area. The PPPR process involves the meeting of two parties- one, a 'mentor' and the other, a 'colleague' or 'mentee'. A working relationship therefore, exists between the two, and that relationship must be kept alive and healthy. Care must be taken with the choice and match of these two. Madison, Knight and Watson (1993) have noted that a mentor – colleague relationship can break down if the personality 'chemistry' between them is not good. Such a situation could occur if the participants at the PPPR do not have the freedom to

choose each other, and are rather forced on each other by some authority, hierarchy or an agent. The danger is that, such a 'forced-relationship' is likely to undermine openness and trust between the persons concerned (Lawson, 1992; Long, 1998). Thus, in a situation whereby the school Principal is *ipso facto* the mentor for the Assistant Principal's PPPR, it might become difficult if they have no common trends. Especially, there must be signs that the pair can work together in harmony and with considerable understanding. It is in this way that a healthy culture of collaboration, which is essential for the achievement of desired outcome by the PPPR, could be further enhanced.

### 7.7.3 The PPPR for Teachers

The CEO had already proposed to extend the PPPR process to staff members who are not in executive positions, including the teachers. A pilot program for the teachers was carried out in 1997 as a prelude to the full-scale involvement of teachers in the PPPR process. This plan, or proposal, is believed to have received a welcome and an acceptance by everyone, including the teachers themselves. However, as has been noted earlier, at the time of this writing, further checking revealed that the pilot or trial PPPR for teachers was not successful and will have to be tried again.

Without prejudice to whatever the outcomes of the pilot program might be, in doing the PPPR for and with teachers a few things should be borne in mind. It must be remembered that classroom teachers are not directly in management position such as the principals or other executives who had already been on the PPPR process. Teachers are a different class of people and therefore, their version of this process needs to be implemented differently and in a way that would benefit them the most. While teachers are good at peer support and can effectively use the services of one another for both individual and group achievements, they are yet to appreciate 'peer assessments'. Also, teachers are not so much given to bureaucratic structures, and they could react adversely to such a tendency in the implementation of the Process.

A 'one-to-one' PPPR process with teachers may be difficult to achieve. Rather, the PPPR process with teachers may succeed better if implemented in a 'group' or 'team-work' environment. A PPPR process conducted in a group would have an advantage over the one-to-one type in a number of ways. One advantage is that the individuals involved would form a collegial network among themselves, which is not possible in one-to-one partnership.

Secondly, there is a better chance to reflect with peers and understand more the implications for the implementation of the process. Dixon (1995, p. 6) made the point that people tend to "speak frankly and confidently of their development needs among peers, colleagues and friends". Also, in a group PPPR, the teachers would make more efficient use of the resources, such as their shared talents, skills, expertise and even their time. These and other such special characteristic conditions if considered in the PPPR process for the teachers, could enhance effectiveness of the implementation. Accordingly, to effectively implement the PPPR with teachers, it is recommended that:

*Recommendation 8.*

The implementation of the PPPR process being proposed for teachers in Cycle 2 be carried out in groups, so that there is the atmosphere of shared discussions during various meetings between the mentors and colleagues.

*Recommendation 9.*

The mentors for the teachers' PPPR process be those who have the expertise in the areas in which the teachers set their goals, and that normally one mentor may moderate a number of teachers, but not one teacher to one mentor.

#### 7.7.4 Recommendations for the Educational Audit

The overall feelings and perceptions about the Educational Audit, as manifested in the interview responses, could be described as *positive*. The Educational Audit Process was described by some as a period of 'critical examination' for the school curriculum, the

staff members and the whole school. Most respondents from both the CEO and the schools were appreciative of the need to have an auditing procedure not only for the purposes of accreditation and registration of schools, but also as a means of making the schools more responsible and accountable. Better still, they appreciated and considered it a great privilege that it is the Catholic Education System that conducts the auditing on its own and later report the Government.

However, of all that constitutes the package of the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney, it was the Educational Audit Process that received the highest expression of concerns by the respondents in this study. The areas of concerns ranged from the issue of paper-work to stress, anxiety, poor teacher's morale and lack of affirmation or acknowledgment of efforts.

As reported in the analysis, a number of respondents from the Schools expressed disappointment and felt left out in the Educational Audit reports. The recent study by Clark (1998) received similar reactions concerning the particular process (see Chapter Six). The truth, however, is that those respondents are seeing the aims of Educational Audit in terms of individual benefits, rather than the whole school. Such a wrong expectation or misplacement of value suggests a lack of adequate understanding, and needs to be addressed. With regards to this, it is recommended that:

*Recommendation 10.*

There be more intensive information and training programs initiative by the CEO aimed at making the school staff members and other stakeholder groups become better aware of the aims and objectives of the Educational Audit and other Processes.

Through such a forum, the teachers will get to understand that the Educational Audit Process is not mainly for individual and personal achievements, rather it is a process that the reports and the results must be viewed and assessed in terms of the benefits they have for the whole school. The information and training program should be a regular feature during Cycle 2 and throughout the life of the Processes.



Concerns were also expressed by some of the respondents about the activities of the Audit Resource Persons (ARPs). Respondents from the schools, particularly teachers, stated that they were reluctant to cooperate with the ARPs because the former felt that the ARPs did not have the experience or expertise for the work of Educational Auditing. Generally auditing puts a lot of stress on the teachers as it tends to bring the latter under examination. To be examined by their peers or fellow teachers was regarded as being 'out of the normal'.

Once again Clark's (1998) results shares a common ground with the findings in the present study. Clark reports that most of the thirty-two comments he received on the ARPs were critical of the activities and the make-up of this group:

Thirty-two comments were made about ARPs. Most of these were criticisms of the present system. . . . Concern was expressed about the selection, lack of suitable qualifications such as knowledge, experience and skills of ARPs, eg. deficiencies in their own programming skills and/or teaching practice (p. 22).

He went on further to report that:

There was also comment that ARPs had shown lack of professionalism, through excessive negative verbal feedback, lack of confidentiality, and narrow appreciation of different ways of achieving outcomes (p. 22).

However, the advantages of using the ARPs for the Educational Audit Process, outweigh the concerns that the respondents had expressed against it. Part of the advantages includes the knowledge and experience gained by the teachers who are enlisted as ARPs by being part of the checking or evaluating that occurs during the auditing process. Their involvement helps in their personal and professional development. The teachers who constitute the ARP's group are known to bring a lot of experience and expertise from their work in the curriculum area that the members of the Main Audit Team may not have. Also in terms of factors assisting the effective implementation of the Processes, the more teachers are involved as ARPs, the more informed they are and the more skilful they become in the implementation.

Drawing on the data from the interviews and also on Clark's (1998, p. 22) conclusions, it is recommended that:

*Recommendation 11.*

The use of Audit Resource Persons for Educational Audit process should continue. However, they must be selected and trained to enhance their efficiency and effectiveness.

*Recommendation 12:*

The duties of the Audit Resource Persons be better defined and clarified to avoid duplication or confusion with the duties of the Main Educational Audit Team.

These recommendations are expected to minimise stress on the participants and enhance positive outcomes for the Audit Process.

In the next section, some suggestions about an alternative or modified approach to the Educational Audit Process are presented.

## **7.8 Recommendations for a Modified Educational Audit Process**

The concerns raised about Educational Audit, as can be seen above, clearly suggest that there is need for a reassessment and refinement of the Process. To design an entirely new Audit process is both impossible and unnecessary. However, modifications are required for it to be more effective.

Some respondents thought that the overwork and stress associated with the Educational Audit may be because all of the audits tend to be conducted at one go. One way forward, therefore, is to modify a model of the Educational Audit process that can be implemented gradually and spread out through the academic calendar year instead of the current model that is implemented as one-off and crowded event. If the timetable for the implementation process was spread out, it would relax both the system and the participants in the program. Accordingly, it is recommended that:

*Recommendation 13:*

The Educational Audit Process be conducted in stages, taking it gradually through the school years and leading up to the time of Registration and Accreditation.

Breaking the Audit Process into phases and spreading it through the school years will not only ease the tension on the teachers, but also make it possible for the school to gradually grow and live in the habit of 'review culture' -a key ingredient of the philosophy and practice of Quality Assurance. Therefore, it should not all be left until the Registration or Accreditation of the school is due.

Some respondents at the interviews suggested the establishment of a special position of an 'Audit Resource Office' directly attached to the Principal in each school. The suggested Audit Resource Officer (ARO), who must be trained for the work, should be a member of staff on permanent appointment or at least on secondment to each school so that he or she is available all the time to be consulted by other staff members. In this case the Audit Resource Officer (ARO) should be responsible for getting the Staff members and the entire school community prepared for the Auditing Team's visit to the school. The idea is to have someone who is trained for the audit, and can be regularly available to liaise with the school staff and the main Audit Team. The availability of such a 'liaison officer' is likely to make the Audit Process more user-friendly.

When this proposal was presented for validation, some of the senior staff members at the CEO expressed concern that it was potentially expensive in financial terms for the Catholic Education system, if it will involve an additional salary commitment. Nevertheless, for a larger and financially stronger system, such as the government schools system, this proposal would be one way of minimising tension and anxiety among teachers that are known to be associated with Educational Audit. Considering the concern for extra financial burden raised by some of the evaluators, the proposal was modified and presented as recommendation 14 that:

*Recommendation 14:*

Specially trained subject or curriculum co-ordinators be formally designated as 'Audit Resource Officers' in each school and charged with specific functions of liaising with other staff members in matters related to the Educational Audit process.

If and where this recommendation is considered, it means that such 'liaison officers' should be the first contact persons and collaborators during both the visits of any external team such as the ARPs and the Main Audit Team. Thus, there is the combined team of some 'insider' audit team, officer, or coordinator and also an 'outsider' or visiting audit team from the CEO or from the government in each situation.

This recommendation is in line with what Stoll and Fink (1996) have discussed about school evaluation. They argue that, the evaluation of a school or a system by a combined team of *insiders* and *outsiders* is more beneficial than being done by an *outsider* or *insider* only. The explanation is that, *insiders* may not always identify the strengths or weaknesses of the system because being insiders they:

- are too close to the system or the problem therein;
- may have limited expectations;
- may unintentionally overlook issues; and
- may have not the sufficient training or skills for the inspection or review work in the particular area, and so may not do a good job (p. 169).

However, the advantage is that, they are the 'insiders' who know the system best. They are the insiders that can readily identify when and where there is a difference in the system or organisation, or when there is no change and development.

On the other hand, the 'outsiders' tend to bring pressure on the schools and individuals to conform to inspection models and criteria. In this way they hinder or inhibit creativity and the development of a reflective practice or culture. The advantages are that, the 'outsider eyes' are likely to bring a broader frame of reference to the system and be better able to

‘see’ issues that may have been overlooked, or have become too familiar to the insiders who may no longer see them as issues or problems (Stoll & Fink, 1996).

In light of the above, it is advisable to employ a combination of the experiences, expertise or skills of both the *outsider* and *insider* for the Educational Audit. Thus, in the auditing process in the Sydney Catholic schools, the collaboration of an external Auditing Team with the school’s own Audit Officer or coordinator would be a commendable idea.

The strength of the proposed model is that it emphasises active participation and sharing among participants, thereby de-emphasising the mood of ‘inspection’ in the system.

### **7.9 Long-term Recommendations**

The Catholic education system should be expected to be able to serve as its own living example of “best practice” in terms of Quality Assurance Processes after having practised it for some time. Therefore, it should be the intention of the CEO, Sydney to reach a point in future when it would no longer be necessary to have an external Audit Team to inspect the Catholic schools for Registration or Accreditation purposes. The Catholic schools system, with so many years of efficient and quality education, should be able to develop and maintain a permanent and credible procedure for internal self-review, evaluation and development. By so doing it would be possible to build quality into the system while inspection is gradually eliminated as recommended by Deming’s 14 point recommendations. It should be noted that this proposal does not advocate a total abolition of ‘inspection’. Instead, there must always be a type of inspection, but that which is carried out in partnership and in full collaboration with the schools and those affected by the program. It implies a process of inspection that is quite transparent to those who are exposed or expected to be exposed to the inspection process.

Also, it appears difficult (if not impossible) to completely eliminate stress, hard work, anxiety, too much paper-work, and all those things that are associated with the

Educational Audit in particular and the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO in general. The recommendations and suggestions offered in this study may just do as much as scale down the apparent problems. However, in the long-term, what is required is that the CEO, Sydney and its schools need to be sure of and stick to what they are committed to, and be consistent in their approach to quality assurance practice. Consistency is a proof that the system is credible and sustainable, and can be a mark of 'quality' (Crosby, 1984; Harvey & Green, 1993).

The current Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney, are becoming larger and rather more sophisticated. In this regard it would be beneficial to clearly determine and outline how they may fit together and how they could all be effectively implemented as one system for the one aim of ensuring quality in the entire system. It is recommended that:

*Recommendation 15*

The Quality Assurance Processes be further streamlined to clarify their links with one another and by so doing, indicate which of the components of the Processes should be implemented first and which of them should be at the end of the implementation procedures.

This is not to say that specific attention should not be given to individual items in the processes such as the PPPR, the Educational Audit, and the SRD. Rather, the linking of the Processes together would make it possible to give a proper and adequate attention to each and all at the same time. The linking of the Processes will help clarify any grey areas that may exist and make the implementation of the Processes not only effective but also more result-oriented. As noted earlier in the discussion section, the Educational Audit provides data for SRD and vice versa. The PPPR derives information for the goal-setting exercise from the outcomes of both SRD and Educational Audit processes. The PPPR flows into the Contract Renewal Process in the case of Principals and Assistant Principals. The linking of the Processes is therefore, important because it would provide a logical sequence for their implementation. It should be the responsibility of the CEO to approve or recommend a suitable and logical order of implementation so that the

Processes are implemented and treated as an integrated whole, and not as isolated and unrelated processes.

### **7.10 Recommending a Seal of Credibility for Quality Assurance Processes**

The Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO Sydney (and indeed, quality assurance processes in educational systems elsewhere) are a large and complex package which is capturing national and international interest in educational leadership. In order to gain further national and international recognition which is already building up (Hargreaves, 1994), there is need to give this package of processes some mark of further strength, identity and credibility. This is what this researcher calls 'A Seal of Credibility'. In our present-day society, a customary and acceptable way by which programs, organisations or institutions of learning are given the seal of credibility is the issuance of a certificate of recognition. As noted in the literature review section of this work, certification is not only a 'quality mark' to encourage and attract outside interests, but also an incentive for the individuals or groups that obtain such a certificate to go for higher achievements. Yorke (1999) appears to have similar ideas when talking about the values of ISO9000 certification or its equivalent for schools or educational institutions. A kind of certification or 'seal of credibility' would further strengthen the management philosophy and practice of Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO Sydney. In regards to this, it is recommended that:

#### *Recommendation 16.*

Some regular course unit (for a post-graduate course) on Quality Assurance Processes related to school management practice be organised and taught in a tertiary institution; such as the Australian Catholic University to promote and add credibility to the management philosophy and practice presented in this study.

If *Recommendation 16* is accepted, it could be a good opportunity to explore the issues that concern accountability, the issue of meeting of Government requirements by non-

government education systems, and the legal implications for present-day school systems. In understanding with the particular institution, the CEO, Sydney may provide the personnel for the teaching of such a course unit if this recommendation is to be considered.

Currently, there is an erroneous notion that, because the term 'Quality Assurance' derived from the business and manufacturing industries background, it cannot be applied successfully to education (Cuttance, 1995a; Kohn, 1993; Woodhouse, 1996). There will be a good forum to effectively correct such a notion, if *Recommendation 16* were implemented.

A course unit in a university or any other tertiary education level is likely to provide the intellectual and academic input to the Quality Assurance Processes and, thereby, help to sharpen the concept and streamline the practice. Also, the Processes will be formally available through such a course, to other education systems that may wish to adopt them directly or benchmark their own practices.

A program such as the proposed course of study will guarantee the consistency and continuity in the implementation of the Processes. Above all, there shall be better chances for deeper research on this topic to make further contributions to this management practice and to education in general.

#### **7.11 Suggestions for Future Researches in this Area**

1. This present work could not possibly cover all areas in this field of study as no single work would ever do. Consequently the present work did not include school students among the participants and this was clearly explained in the Design and Method section. A further research using the same interview method may be expanded to include how the students and parents have experienced and perceived the effect of these Processes. The outcome is likely to be different from the present study.



2. The study found that the area of greatest problem in the implementation of the Processes was the stress and anxiety experienced by teachers during the Educational Audit. A modified model has been proposed. Further study will have to be done on the proposed new model to make sure that it is a better alternative than the current model. Or there may be other ways of doing the Educational Audit with little or no stress on the participants.

3. Again this present study had named some existing quality assurance practices in other schools systems. A future research in this field may wish to do a study of the Outcomes and Effectiveness of other education systems that are implementing Quality Assurance Processes, and compare them with Outcomes and Effectiveness of the Quality Assurance Processes implemented by the CEO, Sydney. Such a study would be able to identify common areas of weaknesses and strengths in the various practices and would be able to make helpful contributions to the growth of Quality Assurance practice in education.

4. A new study may undertake to examine any changes that have occurred in instructional leadership behaviours among principals in relation to teaching and learning outcomes before and after the implementation of the Quality Assurance Processes in the systemic schools.

5. Lastly, this study raised the issue of international certificate of quality assurance standard that could be an equivalent of the ISO 9000 which gives business and manufacturing industries the mark of Quality Assurance. Experts' opinions are still divided about the advantages and disadvantages of adopting the ISO 9000 series in schools and educational institutions. At present very little has been written in this regard since it is a relatively recent thinking. Further research studies will be needed before it becomes clear whether or not this originally business terminology, could be successfully applied in the education sector.

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

This research project set out to study the management philosophy and practice that is currently making great inroads into the education sector, with particular reference the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney. The achievement and maintenance of the quality of education, and consequently raising the standard of achievements or outcomes, have always been the key aims of most educational institutions or systems. The brief history given in Chapter One of this work testifies to the fact that Catholic education in Sydney had always have “quality outcomes” as a priority on its agenda just as most other education systems both in Australia and else where in the world. In an effort to continue to attain this objective and, indeed, improve upon it, educational systems including the Catholic Education System of Sydney, are adopting the ‘new’ approach with title ‘Quality Assurance Processes’. Individual school systems design and approach these processes in ways unique to each system, and as can ‘fit their purposes’. Although this study made references to other known quality assurance practices in other systems in the literature review (see Chapter 2), the focus was particularly on the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO Sydney. The statement of conclusions, therefore, are mostly about the CEO’s practices.

To situate the study and help the reader to understand the scene, it was necessary to explore the historical foundation of the Catholic schools system in Australia starting from time of the early European settlement to the present system, and with particular attention to Sydney in NSW. The various events and stages of development of the Catholic Education in Sydney have been presented, though not in any way exhaustive descriptions or explanations. The organisation and structure of the Catholic Education system in Sydney has passed through some difficult situations, ranging from discrimination on grounds of religious denomination, discrimination and confrontations with the government, shortage and denial of funding assistance, shortage of teachers, lack of adequate facilities, and so on.

Nevertheless, this education system has also enjoyed support from the general population of the Australian people, some governments assistance, generosity of Religious Teaching Orders, and devoted services of seasoned lay teachers and administrators for over 175 years now (Canavan, 1990; Luttrell, 1996). In all this, a quality outcome has always been a priority for the system of Catholic schools.

This study focused on the current approach to Quality Assurance as are being implemented by the CEO Sydney in the Catholic Systemic schools. 'Quality Assurance' is a term adopted by the Catholic education system in Sydney to explain and describe all that is being done to ensure quality outcomes. The Quality Assurance Processes are designed to assist the schools shape up and follow some direction. They help the schools and the system to be critical and reflective about what they are doing and how they are doing it. Over and above these, the Processes are designed to enhance development and accountability in the school system. The Catholic Education system is expected to be accountable to the various stakeholder groups such as the Church, (being the proprietor), the State and Commonwealth Governments as the 80% funding partner, and to the entire society that deserves to know how its citizens are being educated. All of these 'desirables' are possible through the current Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO.

The present study can confidently conclude that the current form of Quality Assurance Processes by the CEO is a most effective way of achieving and maintaining quality outcomes in present-day Catholic schools. And because these Processes are so professionally articulated, and in context with other system, they a unique set of that can enhance development and accountability in an internationally acceptable procedures.

The review of related literature that is reported in Chapter 2 gave support to what the CEO, Sydney is practicing, and place it in context with similar practices in other systems. The literature has revealed that in some quarters, the debate is still on about whether or not Quality Assurance is a suitable terminology and practice for education management, while the CEO was already miles ahead. Indeed, as indicated earlier, the CEO is

embarking on Cycle 2 of the SRD process following the review of Cycle 1 (Clark, 1998; CEO, 1999).

The data obtained through both the literature and the interviews richly informed the research and added credibility to 'Quality Assurance' as practiced by the CEO, Sydney. The Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney, are in consonance with what the literature says about quality assurance practices both in education and business sectors.

There were, however, a few concerns raised by various respondents at the interviews. This study made efforts to address most of those concerns by offering both short-term and long-term recommendations towards more effective implementation procedures. One important recommendation that has been made elsewhere (Canavan, 1992, 1993) and which this study would like to emphasise is the idea of 'linking the Processes together'.

In the policy statement issued by the Executive Director of Schools and published in 1992 (ED/173) and again revised in 1993 (ED/174) there is an expressed need and a proposed design for linking the Processes together. However, from the findings of this present study it would appear that that policy has not yet been adequately understood and addressed to a great extent. It was evident that not many respondents had any knowledge of the design/policy considering the number of those who made reference to it during the interviews. Out of 35 respondents, only four made any reference to the existence of the idea or policy statement about linking the Processes together. (see summary of analysis of all of all interviews in Appendix H). The importance of linking the Processes is also emphasised in the last major survey report by Clark where he recommends that this be given more attention in the Cycle 2 of the SRD implementation:

While the whole school focus is correct, there is a need in Cycle 2 to give greater emphasis to the links between the SRD process and classroom teaching and learning in order to promote action for improvement at classroom level arising out of the SRD experience. This might most easily be achieved by making more explicit the complementary links between the PPPR process and other elements of the SRD process (Clark, 1998, p. 38).

This present study sees with the above the need to the linkage is further stressed and the points where they are linked are clarified in a revised document or handbook for the implementation of the Processes.

One of the most striking findings in this study was in the overall assessment offered by the respondents. While a few respondents had one thing or the other to complain about in certain aspects of the Quality Assurance Processes, the overall assessment showed that 100% of the participants indicated their appreciation for the Processes and all would like to see them continue. Any suggestion by the researcher during the interviews that the CEO discontinues with the implementation of the Processes if they bring so much stress and trauma on the teachers met with emphatic 'NO'. They all would like to have the Processes operating.

This positive stand or position has much to reveal about the Processes as well as the attitudes of the respondents towards their implementation. To take this stand in the first place, is an indication that the implementation of the Processes is already making some impression such that the participants have cause to expect that something better might be coming forth. They want to believe that the Processes have the potential for a future and greater achievement, and so, they would not like to give it up too easily.

Apart from this, the 'option' of these respondents further reveals and implies that:

- they have the willingness to cooperate with the system in the implementation;
- they have the willingness to take responsibility;
- they have the willingness to be held and remain accountable in their work; and
- they have stamina for persistence and the willingness to be consistent.

Above all, the stand or attitude of the respondents would imply that they understand the reason why the term 'Processes' is used and not 'Program'. A 'Program' varies and can

come to a sudden or immediate end. A 'Process' on the other hand, is a continuous system by the very nature and terminology. A 'Process' does not come to a sudden end, rather it continues to grow, develop and improve with time through regular reviews, evaluations and refining. There is no fixed time limit when to stop, but it is ongoing.

Such are the characteristics of the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney. As 'self-reviewing and on-going' *Processes* they are not static, rather the *Processes* are so designed to continue developing and improving in themselves, as they develop and improve the personnel and the system that are implementing them.

Canavan (1996) is keen to drive home the message that, the *Processes* continue to develop and improve itself and the system so that there is no time to say we can reach climax in the effort to ensure quality outcomes.

... we never arrive, rather we continue to build a learning organisation...  
and fine-tune leadership and management strategies in order to ensure  
that those to whom we minister receive the best possible gift (p. 10).

Quality Assurance Processes must be seen as a long-term management practice (strategy) for long-term benefits not just for the CEO, but also for any other educational institutes. It takes time, patience, individual and collective commitments to achieve the benefits. In the CEO as well as any other institutions, Quality Assurance practices must become an agenda item in the 'business life' of the institution; not an event, or function, and certainly not a program (Stringfellow, 1994, p. 12).

A program or process that involves change in any management system, more often than not, causes some discomfort or noise in the system (Fraas and Newman, 1996; Fullan, 1994). The leader, the administrator and/or the evaluator must be able to recognise the difference between the impact of the 'change efforts' and the 'noise made in or by the system' during the implementation. These are two factors that must be viewed separately while evaluating or assessing the outcomes and the effectiveness of the implementation of the Quality Assurance Processes. The CEO Sydney must be able to recognise and

separate the impact of Quality Assurance Processes in its education system from the 'noise' that might be coming from the system. The 'noise' may be on the negative while the impact may be all on positive. And if they are confused together, the outcomes of the Processes might be a misjudgment. The implementation of the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney will almost certainly produce two types of 'noise'. In such a situation, the various stakeholder groups or key players in the system need to understand where the difference lies.

It is hoped that the recommendations and suggestions offered in this work will be built into useful strategies to enhance the effectiveness of Quality Assurance Processes and improve the overall quality outcomes, not only in the CEO, Sydney, but also in the education sector as a whole.

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# APPENDICES

**APPENDIX A:**  
**RECORD SHOWING INSPECTORS OF**  
**SCHOOLS IN THE ARCHDIOCESE OF**  
**SYDNEY (1848-1965)**

## APPENDIX A:

Inspectors of Schools in the Archdiocese of Sydney 1848-1965			
<i>Term of Inspector</i>	<i>Diocesan Inspector</i>	<i>Assistant</i>	<i>Historical factors</i>
1848-66	Fr. John McEncroe	Mr. Thomas Levinge (1851-?) Mr. Thomas Makinson Mr. William P. Casey (1861-65) Mr. Joseph Reilly (1866)	Catholic schools under Denominational Board from 1848 to 1866 Dismissed in 1865  Public Schools Act 1866 ended his role.
1867-82	No evidence found of Catholic inspectors.		Catholic schools inspected by Council of Education.
1883-84	Mr. John W. Rogers		All government funding now withdrawn. Rogers dismissed in 1884
1892-95		Six Visitors (priests)	A part-time role. Each Visitor was assigned a District in the city and suburbs.
1896-99	Fr. Francis Timoney		
1899-1908	Fr. James Whyte		
1908-10	Fr. Arthur Hogan		
1911			No records of inspection found for January to September
1911 Oct-1919	Fr. James Meany	Fr. Richard Darby (1915-?)	
1920-23(?)	Fr. John Troy	Mr. T.J. Davis (1922-29)	
1923-29	Fr. Patrick Crowley	Mr. P. J. Davis	
1927-39	Fr. Timothy O'Connor (Fr. Pierse was Acting Inspector in 1938)	Mr. John Connolly MA (1929-39)	
1939-48	Fr. Thomas Pierse	Mr. Kevin Ryan (1940-51); Fr. John Slowey (1947-48)	
1949-65	Fr. John Slowey (In 1954 Fr. Slowey's title was changed to Diocesan Director of Schools)	Fr. Walter O'Grady (1948-62), Fr. Cornelius Duffy (1951-62), Fr. Gregory Meere (1955-63), Fr. Brian Grittenden (1956-66), Fr. Geoff Dickinson (1965-68), Br. Mark May (1965-67), Sr. Norbert Donnelly (1965-72), Br. M D Shanahan (1965-72).	The inspectors appointed in 1965 were envisaged as 'supervisors' rather than 'inspectors'. Also the Catholic Building & Finance Commission was formed and would soon have substantial influence over schools.

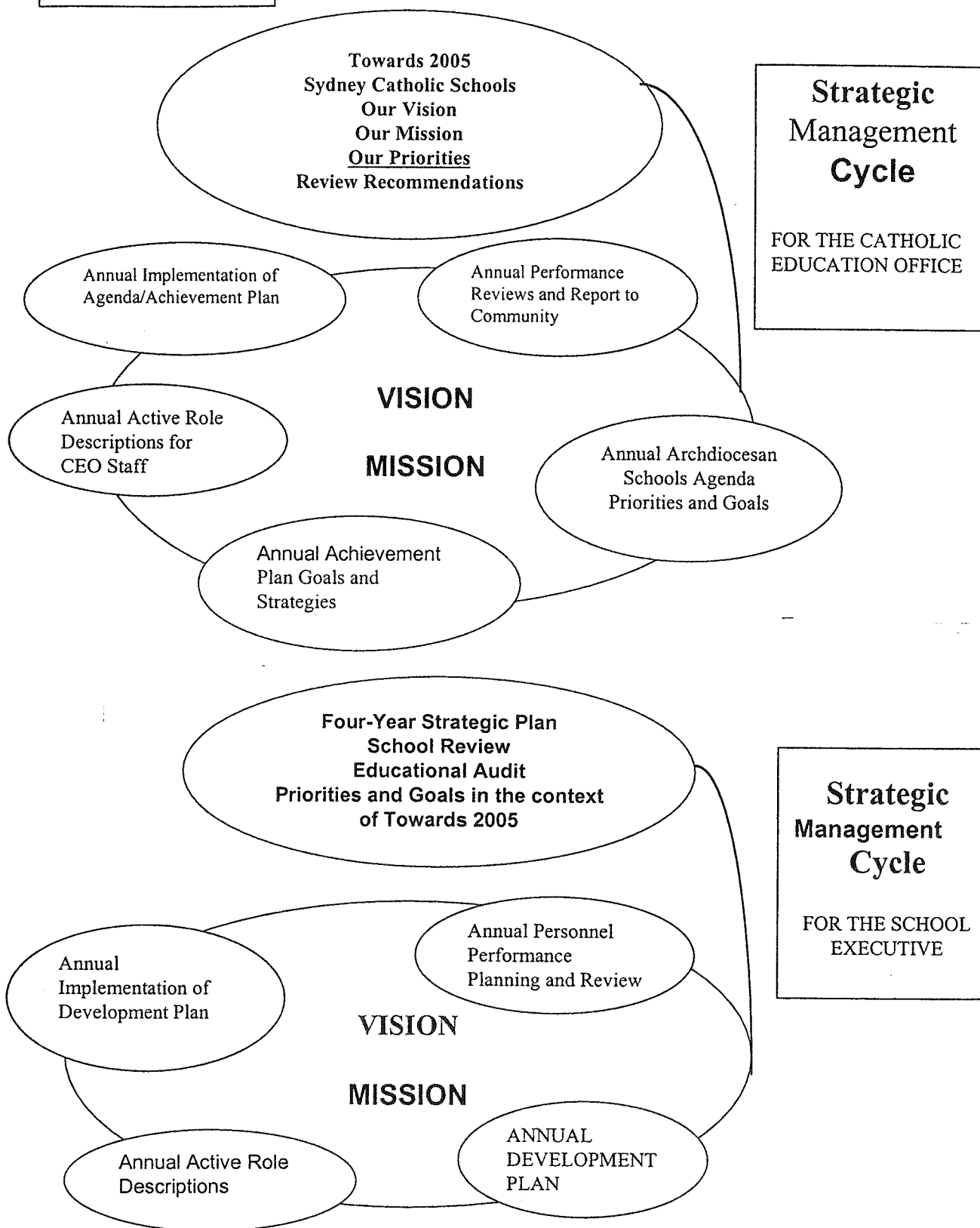
SOURCE: John J. Luttrell, (forthcoming).

\*(John Luttrell has been compiling the history of Catholic Education in Sydney for the period between 1848 and 1965 with particular reference to the leadership structure and style. The above tabulation was adapted because it was a relevant reference to a portion of the present project.)

**APPENDIX B:**

**STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT CYCLE FOR CEO OFFICER AND  
THE SCHOOL EXECUTIVES**

# APPENDIX B:



Source: Canavan (1995, p. 22). TOWARDS 2005.

**APPENDIX C:**

**LETTER OF APPROVAL FROM THE ETHICS  
COMMITTEE ON RESEARCH  
TO CONDUCT  
THE RESEARCH**

AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY  
Office of Research

RESEARCH PROJECTS ETHICS COMMITTEE  
ETHICS CLEARANCE FOR A RESEARCH PROJECT - APPROVAL FORM

Supervisor:	Professor Tony d'Arbon	Campus:	Mt St Mary
Co-Supervisor	Prof Patrick Duignan	Campus:	
		Campus:	Mt St Mary
Student Investigator/s:	Fr Michael Idobo	Campus:	
		Campus:	

Ethics clearance has been provisionally granted for the project:

**Quality assurance processes:** The nature, outcomes and effectiveness of the quality assurance processes of the Catholic Education Office, Sydney

for the period: **27 September - 30 June 1997** (or twelve months from the date when contact with human participants commences - see below)

**Research Ethics Committee Register Number: N96 - 026**

subject to the following conditions as stipulated in the *National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) Statement on Human Experimentation and Supplementary Notes 1992*:

- a) that principal investigators provide reports annually, on the form supplied by the Institutional Ethics Committee, on matters including:
  - security of records
  - compliance with approved consent procedures and documentation
  - compliance with other special conditions; and
- b) as a condition of approval of the protocol, require that investigators report immediately anything which might affect ethical acceptance of the protocol, including:
  - adverse effects on subjects
  - proposed changes in the protocol
  - unforeseen events that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project

and subject to the conditions stipulated by the NSW/ACT Inter-Faculty Research Projects Ethics Committee:

*A Final Report Form will need to be completed and submitted to the NSW/ACT Inter-Faculty Research Projects Ethics Committee within one month of the completion of the project.*

Please sign, date and return this form to the RPEC Executive Officer to whom you submitted your application in order for your approval to be confirmed and entered into the NHMRC Institutional Register.

Signed: *Regina Hall*  
RPEC Executive Officer

Date: 4 October 1996

(To be completed by the Chief Investigator or Student and Supervisor, as appropriate)

The date when I/we expect to commence contact with human participants or access their records is: 1<sup>st</sup> November 1996

I/We hereby declare that I/we am/are aware of the conditions governing research involving human participants as set out in the Research Projects Ethics Committee's *Guidelines for Researchers/Students* and agree to the conditions stated above.

Signed: *Tony d'Arbon*  
(Chief Investigator or Supervisor, as appropriate)

Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> October 1996

Signed: *Michael Idobo*  
(Student Investigator, as appropriate)  
(Student Investigator, as appropriate)

Date: 30/10/1996



**APPENDIX D**

**LETTER OF APPROVAL FROM  
THE CATHOLIC EDUCATION OFFICE, SYDNEY  
TO CONDUCT THE RESEARCH**



# Catholic Education Office, Sydney

38 RENWICK STREET • PO BOX 217 • LEICHHARDT, NSW 2040 • PH: (02) 569 6111 • FAX: (02) 550 0052

PD-RS10/emd

30 August, 1996

Rev Michael Idobo  
c/- St Joseph's Presbytery  
763 Canterbury Road  
BELMORE NSW 2192

Dear Fr Michael,

I acknowledge, with thanks, receipt of your application to conduct research in the Sydney Archdiocesan school system.

It is with pleasure I confirm that approval is given for you to undertake a study titled:

**Quality Assurance Processes : The Nature, Outcomes and Effectiveness of the Quality Assurance Processes of the Sydney Archdiocesan Catholic Education Office.**

The proposed study will involve 3 and 5 teachers, including the Principal, in one Primary and one Secondary school in each of the 3 Archdiocesan Regions. In addition, it is proposed that a selection of senior CEO staff at the Leichhardt and Regional Offices will be invited to participate.

As you would appreciate, it should be understood that it is the prerogative of any one of these teachers or their Principals whom you might approach to decline your invitation to be involved in this study or to withdraw from involvement at any time.

The privacy of any school or CEO personnel involved, must, of course, be preserved at all times.

Data gathering will be via use of the structured interview technique. Interviews of the participating school and CEO personnel are planned to commence in September and conclude by mid Term 4 1996.

Whilst relevant CEO staff will assist you in getting this study underway, it is important that you maintain close liaison with Prof. Tony d'Arbon at ACU, during the months ahead.

May I ask that when your research has been completed, a summary report of the findings and/or recommendations be forwarded to this office as soon as practicable after results are to hand.

In the meantime should you require any additional information about research in Archdiocesan schools, please feel free to contact me at your convenience.

I wish you well in this undertaking.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Peter Donnan', written over a horizontal line.

Peter Donnan

for: Br Kelvin Canavan, fms  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF SCHOOLS

CC: Prof. Tony d'Arbon, ACU Strathfield

**APPENDIX E:**

DISCLOSURE AND INFORMED  
CONSENT/INFORMATION  
LETTER & CONSENT  
FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS

**APPENDIX E:**DISCLOSURE AND INFORMED CONSENT/INFORMATION LETTER.

**TITLE OF PROJECT: QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCESSES: The Nature, Outcomes and Effectiveness of the implementation of the Quality Assurance Processes of the Catholic Education Office, Sydney.**

NAME OF SUPERVISOR: Professor Tony d'Arbon fms

NAME OF CO-SUPERVISOR: Professor Patrick A. Duignan.

NAME OF PARTICIPANT: .....

NAME OF RESEARCHER: Michael Idobo

I am a research student in the Australian Catholic University, Strathfield campus. The title of my research project is as given above and I am working with Professors Tony d'Arbon fms, and Patrick Duignan as my supervisors.

The proposed research project will study and analyse the Nature, Outcomes and Effectiveness of the Quality Assurance Processes of the Catholic Education Office (CEO), Sydney. It will examine the perceptions of some significant stakeholders in the Catholic Education system including some senior staff members of the CEO and the schools about the effectiveness of the implementation of these Processes. As a result, the study will critically evaluate the effectiveness of the Processes and study and analyse their outcomes in the first five years of implementation.

To do this, I plan to conduct a series of interviews with the key players in the Quality Assurance Processes and I invite you to participate in this project.

The interviews will be conducted at the CEO Leichhardt, the three Regional Offices and at six selected schools. Each interview is expected to last for approximately 30 minutes. All questions and discussions at the interviews will concern professional and organisational issues regarding the Quality Assurance Processes. No personal matters will be discussed.

To assist me, I would request your permission to tape-record the interviews. Participants have the right, however, to stop the tape-recording at any time during the interview should they have any objections. The recorded tapes will be handled and heard by me, the researcher only. The taped interviews will be transcribed and a copy of the transcript will be sent to individual participants for validation and approval before use. To protect the

privacy of participants and ensure confidentiality, the tapes will be destroyed or erased after transcription.

In later times the results from the study may appear in some publications or be provided to other researchers. Where such occurs, it will be done carefully and in a manner that does not identify the participants in any way.

Participants should benefit professionally from the interview and discussion sessions since that will be an opportunity to reflect on the strengths and limitations of the Quality Assurance Processes as they have experienced. It is anticipated that the results of the study will enhance the Quality Assurance practice in educational system in general.

Should you have any questions concerning the proposed project or require further clarifications, please feel free to contact me on the following address:

763 Canterbury Road  
Belmore NSW 2192  
Phone: (02) 9759 1280.

The Australian Catholic University Research Project Ethics Committee has approved this project. Should you have any objections or dissatisfaction about your treatment by the researcher, please feel free to direct your query to:

The Chair.  
Research Project Ethics Committee,  
Australian Catholic University  
179 Albert Road, Strathfield NSW 2135  
Tel: (02) 9739 2159

If you are therefore, willing to volunteer participation in this project, please show your consent by signing the form below. Two copies of the form are hereby provided. Please sign both, keep one for your record and return the other to me in the self-addressed envelope provided.

Following receipt of your acceptance, I will be in contact with you to arrange time for the interview.

Thank you very much for your kind co-operation.

Yours sincerely,

Michael Idobo  
(Researcher)

## CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS

### TITLE OF PROJECT:

**QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCESSES: The Nature, Outcomes and Effectiveness of the implementation of the Quality Assurance Processes of the Catholic Education Office, Sydney.**

I have read and understood the information above and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in this activity, realising that I can withdraw at any time even before the project is completed.

I agree that research data collected for the project may be published or provided to other researchers in a form that does not identify me in any way.

NAME OF PARTICIPANT.....

PHONE: HOME..... WORK.....

SIGNATURE:..... DATE.....

NAME OF RESEARCHER.....

PHONE: HOME..... WORK.....

SIGNATURE:..... DATE.....

*N/B Please retain one copy for your record.*

**APPENDIX F****INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR THE MAIN STUDY**

**Appendix F: The Interview Schedule for the Main Study Project**

To obtain data about the nature of and the awareness of people of the existence of the processes, questions were designed as in Schedule A:

**SCHEDULE A**

1. What do you understand by the term Quality Assurance?
2. What do you understand by the term Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney?
3. Would you name the different components of the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney?
4. When and how did you first become aware of these processes?
5. Were you and are you still happy with the way these processes were first brought to your awareness or would you suggest alternative ways?
6. Would you briefly outline the main characteristics of each of these processes?
7. What are these processes designed to achieve in both the schools and the CEO?

To obtain data about the outcomes of the implementation of these processes so far, questions were designed as in Schedule B:.

**SCHEDULE B**

1. What are some of the positive outcomes you can observe in the schools or in the CEO, Sydney, as a result of the implementation of these Quality Assurance Processes?
2. What are some of the negative outcomes you can observe in the schools or in the CEO, Sydney, as a result of the implementation of these Quality Assurance Processes?
3. What would you identify as desirable outcomes that are yet to be achieved through these processes?
4. How do you think these can be achieved given the current form of the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney?



To obtain data about the factors assisting and /or hindering the effectiveness of the implementation of the processes, questions were designed as in Schedule C:

**SCHEDULE C..**

- 1. How involved are you in the implementation of the Quality Assurance Processes in the school (if you are in school) or in the CEO system (if you are in the CEO)?**
- 2. What exactly do you do in your area of involvement in the implementation of the processes?**
- 3. What factors do you know have assisted the effective implementation of the Quality Assurance Processes and why?**
- 4. What factors do you know are hindering the effective implementation of these processes and why so?**
- 5. What aspect of the Quality assurance Processes do you really like and why?**
- 6. What aspects of these processes do you not like and why?**
- 7. Would you offer any suggestions for the possible modifications of the current form of the Quality Assurance Processes?**
- 8. Overall, what is your general assessment of the present Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney?**

## **APPENDIX G**

### **EXAMPLE OF INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT**

## APPENDIX G: EXAMPLES OF THE INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS

### APPENDIX G-1a:

#### EXAMPLE OF INTERVIEWS WITH RESPONDENT FROM THE SCHOOL.

- I: Good morning, and welcome. I'm pleased to have you at this interview and I thank you for accepting to be part of this project.
- R: Thank you for the opportunity.
- I: You've got the schedule, the interview questions. I have designed them in three sections namely: A, B and C. They are so designed to correspond to the key elements of the title of the research project-- Nature, Outcomes and Effectiveness of the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney..

#### SECTION A: ON THE NATURE OF QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCESSES

What do you understand by the term "quality assurance"?

- R: Quality assurance em // .. it's a really a big term. I suppose it's a big umbrella term with lots of things underneath it. It's both a developmental and a supervisory notion. The assurance part is a supervisory part, the part where you are assured you know that quality is occurring, but the quality part of it is also developmental, that you're always trying to work out better ways to do things and better ways to improve, so it's a combination of both a supervisory and developmental notions there.
- I: What do you then understand by the term Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney?
- R: Well the Quality Assurance Processes in CEO have been developing over a number of years, and they have lots of different elements to them. The big 'Whole School' ones, I think, such as School Review and Development (SRD), which includes the Education Audit, and these are whole school processes looking at the school and its relation to the school community, in the case of SRD, and the school, and how it delivers quality educational programs. There are also processes like Contract Renewal process for principals and PPPR for both the principals and other executives.

I: When and how did you first become aware of these Processes of the CEO?

R: Right, I became aware of them in my work within the CEO, so that within the office we trialed PPPR processes first of all with office staff. I can't remember how many years ago, but before it was used with principals it was used within the office, just supervising yourself.

I: Was it called quality assurance processes or something else?

R: It wasn't called quality assurance, it was just called PPPR, and each year it was slightly different, even each half year it was slightly different, as they were refining the process. So I was involved in it quite early on as a participant in it. When quality assurance words started to be used, I was part of those developments too, because that was in the time they were looking at SRD and the Ed audit, and I was in on the discussions in the curriculum department, as to what that meant, you know, what does this mean for our schools, and actually on behalf of curriculum I did a bit of a study on total quality management, and other aspects of quality assurance, and did a bit of a research project, it was really a literature search, and summarised what was around in those areas.

Now that was also occurring in human resources, who had the main carriage of it. But people in curriculum wanted to know about it too, and from a curriculum angle, not from an employment angle, not from a human resources angle but from a curriculum angle. So I undertook that, which was more or less a literature search, and then we started to have discussions about what did this mean in terms of delivery of quality curriculum in our schools. Once again we weren't as interested in it from a human resources angle, but from a curriculum angle.

There were a whole lot of meetings, with butcher's paper up on the wall, where we'd say, what does it mean, what could it include, what could be in it, what could be out of it, and took a long time to decide what it meant for the programs, what does it mean for the programs that are sponsored by the Commonwealth Department, what does it mean for our normal day to day classroom programs. What's in it and what's not in it was our big discussion.

And then, I was also one of the early Ed audit resource people from the CEO, and I did a range of subject areas, it just depended what they were short of. So if they needed someone for a subject area, I just did whatever was available. So in PPPR for quite a number of years, and from Ed audit, a few years leading up to the way it finally ended up looking, and less to do with school review, because it was less about curriculum, it was bigger issues. I wasn't as involved with Ed audit, I was more involved in school review, not that involved, and then, yes that's when I first became aware, so it was quite early on.

I: So how did the introduction go, how did the CEO introduce it to you as the office staff?

R: All right, for PPPR it was gradual, it was slow, because it was, you will be doing this and this is the paper you fill out, and we all gave it a go, and then we talked about it and then we refined it and changed it, then we had another go at it, so that was just, it was a developmental thing. We knew it was developing, we knew we were a bit of guinea pigs with it, but that was okay.

Educational Audit did feel like it suddenly came upon us, but something like that had been talked about for a while, and we knew that we had to do something because the way the certification procedure was changing. Previously inspectors from the Department of Education came into our schools, to inspect the schools, to give them certification to operate schools in New South Wales, and we knew that that system was changing, we knew that the CEO Sydney had decided to set up its own system of accreditation, which it was allowed to do, because there were changes at the State Government level.

So we knew those things were happening, and it was just how it was going to happen and what shape it was going to take. So they were brought to my awareness, as it impacted on my job, and as committees had to be formed, working groups had to be formed. So it's a bit different to someone who was in the schools.

It just became part of the job that you had to do, and would you check up on this, will you join that committee, will you be part of this think tank. It was just one job among many that you were called on to do.

I: Now you are in the school, does that make any difference to you?

R: Well, I know the background, I know where it's come from, and I know why it's shaped the way it is. But it's a very different experience working within the school, to working with it in a theoretical way, as to what's the theories behind it, what structure should it have, what principles its serving, which is the level that I was involved in, you know, what should be in it, what should be out of it, what does it really mean to, how do you manage it on a day to day basis. It's a very different way of looking at it, but at least I know the background. I know why it is like it is, so that when you say, that looks silly, why is that there, you know where it's come from. At least you know where it's come from. So it makes it easier to understand it. I don't know whether it makes it easier to manage it, on a day to day basis.

I: If I understand your explanation, it seems that the whole Processes came by way of trial and error; they keep correcting and developing till what they have today?

- R: PPPR did. PPPR came from that. The Ed audit was more formed, it was less trial, trial, trial. There were some trials, but it came out more informed.
- I: If that was the case, were you and are you still happy with the way these processes were first brought to your awareness, or would you suggest alternative ways?
- R: Given the resources available, I think that the best was done. Ed. Audit and School Review are very expensive processes for the system. I hope we're going to get our money's worth out of it, because they're very expensive. But they do meet what was necessary, and they meet our beliefs about how such a thing should happen.
- I: Would you briefly outline the main characteristics of each of these processes?
- R: So, if we go with the PPPR first of all. Its main features are that you are working with a supervisor, whose in a mentor role, that it's about development, it's about identifying those areas in need of development, and committing yourself to those areas of development, and your supervisor committing themselves to supporting you in those areas of development. And it also means that your timetable, that time with your supervisor, to talk to them about these issues, otherwise the days, the weeks, the months, the years go by, but if you know you have to have start of the year, a mid year and an end of year PPPR appointment, there's an official form to fill in, it makes you put in, that makes you have it. But it is about dialogue, it is about mentoring, it is about development. And you identifying those areas that you need to develop, and your supervisor agreeing with those, supporting you in them.

The contract renewal I know less about, but I can tell you about next year, when I go through it, but contract renewal as I understand it is a similar process to the PPPR, it's got similar principles to it, but it's a bigger event than that, but it's very similar, it's you identifying the areas of strength, the areas of weakness, and it's just that more people are involved. Others in the school community are asked about your performance. So it's not just you and your supervisor, it's other people that you impact on. So it's like PPPR, there's just more people involved.

Educational Audit is about quality teaching and learning programmes. A team from the outside coming in and having a look at where the school is at in terms of curriculum, it's to do with documentation, it's to do with being able to evidence qualities occurring, so it's a lot about documentation, and it's a whole school thing, even though each individual teacher is part of the contribution, it's not about them as an individual teacher, it's about the whole school performance. And school review is about the whole school community, values and beliefs, and how you're

living up to your mission statements. So it's a community looking at itself. So they've each got quite different elements to them.

I: Briefly, what were these Processes designed to achieve both in the schools and the CEO?

R: I think they are designed to assure all those involved, (all the stakeholders) that quality is occurring in the school system. So the PPPR is designed so that you are confirmed in your position and your supervisor has the opportunity to comment on your performance and your position, all the way up to school review, which is the whole school community looking at itself. Those who are involved, all stakeholders involved, have an opportunity to assure themselves that quality is occurring in the schools. It also ensures accountability to the outside as well, to the wider stakeholders, to the funders such as the government, to the supporters, to the wider community, because you end up with something you can publish about it, so that people feel more secure that things are as they should be. And usually things are as they should be, it just means that everyone's assured of that. You've got some evidence to prove that.

### **SECTION B: ON THE OUTCOMES OF THE PROCESSES**

I: What are some of the positive outcomes you have observed in the schools or in the CEO as a result of the implementation of these Processes?

R: Okay. Well I think in terms of PPPR, the positive outcome is that you write it in your diary and it happens, and it's an opportunity for you to sit with your colleagues, or for you to sit with your supervisor and talk about the job in a formal way.

I: What would that result in?

R: Well it makes you stop and think, it makes you stop and reflect, and it makes you commit yourself to a plan of development, so "force" is too strong a word, but it gives you that opportunity to stop, think, reflect about the role and make plans for development in it. Otherwise the year just gets along and you don't stop it. You stop and think about the events, but you don't stop and take a step back and look at the performance in it.

In terms of Ed audit, the positive outcome is once again schools stop and look at themselves, and are able to assure themselves that quality is going on, and they can pat themselves on the back for that. And the school community feels more secure, parents feel more secure, that they feel that some inspection in a way has happened, someone can assure them that quality is occurring.

And the same with School Review, it's that chance of stopping and having a look at how you are, measuring up against the mission. It's the opportunity to stop and reflect and commit and for all those involved, to feel sure that things are as they can be.

I: What are some of the negative outcomes you have observed in the schools or in the CEO as a result of the implementation of these Quality Assurance Processes?

R: The negatives are that it's costly, it's costly in money and it's costly in time. So whether it's cost effective I'm not sure, I think we have to run with it a bit longer to see whether we get improvements that are worth the outlay in time and money. They're costly exercises. The other negative outcome is it's high stress on the teachers. The School Review in this school didn't prove to be high stress for the teachers, they quite enjoyed the School Review process, but the Educational Audit process, as much as we tried to make it as calm and as stress-free and as simple and as streamlined, as no-fuss as possible, in interviews the teachers have told me, this has been the most stressful year in their professional lives. And most of them are very experienced teachers, they are not first year outs, they've been teaching for a long time, and they found the Ed audit exceptionally stressful. So, that we've had to deal with.

That stress, you then have to, in a sense, nurse the staff along for the rest of the year. Once they are at that level of stress, it takes ages for them to come back out of that, it takes ages for them to regain their energies. So you have to keep watching that you are not putting anything extra on them. And it also meant that their energies were deflected from other things. So it's expensive in terms of emotional energy and stress on the teachers, the Ed audit. And both Ed audit and SRD are expensive in terms of money and time. So we'll know eventually if it's worth the effort that goes in to it.

I: What would you identify as desirable outcomes that are yet to be achieved through these Processes?

R: We do not know what longitudinal gains are there, we can only be assured of the quality if that is happening. If it will improve what is happening, we don't know yet.

I: Let us rather go over to section C which is to do with the effectiveness of the implementation of the Processes.



### SECTION C: EFFECTIVENESS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROCESSES.

I: In passing, you mentioned how much you have been involved in it, and that was when you were in the CEO, not in the school. May I still ask, how much are you involved now in these processes?

R: Well, PPPR for myself, with the consultant, PPPR with myself and the executive team, and we undertook SRD and Ed audit this year in the school. So pretty heavy involvement this year in the school.

I: Would you say briefly what exactly you do in those areas now in the school?

R: Well, in terms of my own PPPR, I have a series of interviews with the consultant, in terms of the executive PPPR, a series of interviews with me as their supervisor, across the year. So I'm a colleague in my own, I'm a supervisor in the executive's PPPR, and as the principal I was the leader of the SRD and the Ed audit Processes in the school.

I: What are some of the factors that you know are assisting the effectiveness of the implementation of these Processes?

R: The positive things, about the process, were that it's a process, and it's been a well thought through process, and it's based on sound principles. The other thing that helps is that all the bits of the jigsaw fit together, that PPPR and contract renewal and Ed audit and SRD are all part of a big jigsaw, they don't work against each other, they actually have been thought of as one, they all can be written within one model, and so that they're not disparate, they're not fighting against each other, they actually fit in. Now that really helps when system supports them with resources and the system supports them as in they're a major thrust within the system, so that your consultants' time is invested in them, there's a facilitator for SRD and that the system really supports you, the Ed audit team arrive, so it's built into the whole system of events, so you're not doing it alone in your little school. Yes, I you're trying to implement them, that things actually fit in, and have the same philosophy behind them all, the same principles behind them all.

The other thing that assists them is that the system supports them, the think in the system they're . . . evidence of support, and the fact that it is a process and they all fit in together, it's a big bonus. There is a document about linking the processes. That's great, because they don't fight each other, they actually fit together, and you can see how they all go together. That's really nice.

I: What could be some factors that are hindering the effective implementation of these Processes?

R: Factors hindering, I think the stress on the part of the teachers in terms of Ed audit is a big factor, because Ed audit is about teaching and classrooms programmes, and that's where it really hits the teachers, that's what they're on about. They're on about their classroom, their kids, their teaching program, and that shakes them to the core, even if they're excellent teachers. Teachers don't necessarily have high self esteem about themselves as professionals, so something like Ed audit shakes them.

They also are committed people and they don't want to be the one who lets the team down, you know. When they know that the school is going well, they don't want to be the ones that mess it up. So it is the very professionalism and commitment that causes the stress. It's the thing that you want them to have, which is commitment and professionalism, that causes them that stress, because they want to do the best and show the school at its best.

Another thing is that they involve themselves personally in it. But then, when they get the report, the report is about the whole school. It's not a person by person exercise, it's a whole school exercise, and they feel that it doesn't reflect all the effort that they put in. So there's a mismatch there in the Ed audit, between the personal level of commitment and involvement of each individual teacher, which is high, but then the systems see it, and the report is written as a whole school thing. So the teachers are then disappointed. They put a lot of themselves in it, and there's nothing of themselves individually in the report.

I: So what do you suggest the CEO could do to assist?

R: I haven't worked that one out. I have identified what the issue is, but I haven't, I can't see my way clear, maybe once there is PPPR for teachers, which is one part of a link that's missing and is being worked on in trial schools at the moment, maybe when that link in the chain's put in there, or that jigsaw's put in there, then ed audit will become the whole school event that it should be, and individual teachers' performance will be within their PPPR. Maybe once that bit is in there, Ed audit will change slightly. Teachers don't have an opportunity to prove themselves individually. There's no part of the process yet where they get to prove themselves individually. Maybe when PPPR for teachers is in there, that'll move into that slot, and Ed audit can become the whole school thing. So maybe it's just that it's filling a vacuum.

I: So at present Ed audit is just a kind of inspection program, go in there and inspect the school and pass judgment, that's what happens, or that's the way the teachers see it?

R: That's what the teachers think is going to happen... Yes, and they think it's going to be about them individually, and when they get the report, it's about the whole school, they go, where am I as a teacher in this report.

- I: So when you say that's what they think, you mean that they are wrong or...?
- R: That's what they've said.
- I: They said so, and is that correct?
- R: Well yes, because they invested high emotional energy and professionalism and credibility in the process of Ed audit, and then they got a whole school report.
- I: So it's not just that they think, but it is so.
- R: It is so. But I think it is so because there's still one bit missing, which is the PPPR for teachers. When they will get feedback in a structured way about their performance. And if they get that through PPPR they won't be looking at it, trying to get it out of Ed audit. They're looking to Ed audit to do something that it's not designed to do. I think that's the solution. We'll have to wait and see. I haven't got any other solution.
- I: What aspects of these Processes do you like most and why?
- R: I support it as being a whole system, that each of the bits fits together. I don't know if I fully support the resources going into it, because I know that it has given us the assurance part. I don't know if it's going to deliver improvement. I've yet to be convinced of that, and I think we just have to live it. So I fully support it as a notion, I fully support it as a series of things that fit together in a whole process, and I'm looking forward to it being a full process, and every bit being there.
- I don't know if I could fully support the level of resources going into it, because that takes away from other developmental, teacher professional development and other things, that could be occurring. So I'm not sure if I can live with the financial cost, forever. There must be ways to streamline it a bit, to cost less. Or maybe that's just what it costs, and we've just to live with that. In the budget I think there's only a cake of a certain size. And if one bit, like quality assurance, takes more money, and it wasn't there before, so it wasn't a piece of the cake, suddenly it takes a slab of the cake, something else misses out. The cake doesn't get bigger. So fair enough, it's a slice of the cake, I'm not sure how big I'd like it to be, this slice of the cake.
- I: It might be a question of modifying the budgeting and planning
- R: Yes.
- I: Overall, what is your general assessment of the whole Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney?

- R: I think it's in a good place, I think that we need to learn from the last couple of years and what's happened, I think we have to listen to schools and those involved in it, as to how it's going. I think that's happening. There's been evidence every year that feedback from schools has been listened to and feedback from facilitators, and feedback from audit teams has been listened to, and the process has been modified as it's going along. So I think it's got a good feedback loop, a good self-reviewing loop within the process. So I think it's fine. I think it's still at beginning stages, but I think it's fine. I just hope we don't falter, I hope we keep moving forward with it, otherwise all those energies are lost. I think we have to keep moving forward.
- I: You wouldn't like it to be scrapped, would you?
- R: No, no, I think that it would cause a high level of cynicism of school staffs if it was suddenly scrapped after all that, and I think it's too good to scrap.

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KEY: 'I' stands for Interviewer; and 'R' stands for Respondent

## APPENDIX G-1b:

### EXAMPLE OF INTERVIEW WITH A RESPONDENT FROM THE CEO

- I: Welcome, and thank you very much for accepting to be part of this project.
- R: My pleasure.
- I: You've got the schedule, the interview questions. I have designed them in three sections namely: A, B and C. They are so designed to correspond to the key elements of the title of the research project-- Nature, Outcomes and Effectiveness of the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney.

### SECTION A: NATURE OF THE PROCESSES

- I: No 1 is a general question: what do you understand by the term "quality assurance"?
- R: Well I've come to understand that that term in particular means ways of determining and being very sure of the success of programmes that are operating, and being able to name what is quality and what may need to be done to move something towards being quality, whether it be an educational programme or teaching practice or systems that might be in operation.
- I: What then do you understand by the term Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO Sydney?
- R: Well, while that term might not be directly used within the CEO, to talk about the processes, the processes of school review and development, an educational audit, linking with the contract renewal process for principals, I would see as our major ways of determining what's happening in the schools, and the quality of what's happening in schools.
- I: Would you please go on to name the components of these processes?
- R: Certainly. The school review and development process is a process that schools undertake every four years in which the community, and the community is the parents, the children and the staff of that community, talk about what's effective, what's working within that community and what might be the directions for the future over the next four years. A four year plan is the actual result of that process,

and in that plan the common elements that were issues of concerns for the staff and the parents and the children are carried forward as recommendations for implementation over the next four years.

It's also a process in whereas you identify what's working, and that's a very important part of the process. Affirmation, for the good that people do is vital, in every group of people, before they're able to move on to whatever the issues might be, and that need to be addressed. It's a process that allows for great opportunity for consultation between the community and the wider community of the parish. It allows people to tap into one another in a way that perhaps they may not have done before.

It breaks down barriers, and it develops a sense of collegiality and community as they move the strategic plan forward, because there's an expectation that in identifying the areas for future growth, then everyone will be part of the solution, and my experience to date would say that's a very effective way of moving a community forward.

The Educational Audit Process is a process around looking with a clinical eye at the curriculum that is offered within a school, and how that meets the Education Act requirements, around the key learning areas within a primary school in particular. And because I'm a primary consultant, I will talk within the context of primary schools. It's an opportunity for staff to examine their curriculum, to name the strengths in each of the KLAs, and to name the challenges or the areas for future direction.

An independent panel comes in and examines the curriculum at that school and validates the findings of the staff, and by and large the recommendations that the panel develop are very similar to the recommendations that the staff carry forward. On some occasions that's not the case, and additional recommendations are made. There is an expectation that over the next four year period, that those recommendations will be implemented and change will occur at a classroom level.

The purpose is to impact on classroom practice and children's learning, so that the quality of children's learning is constantly being challenged to improve.

I: Any other one?

R: And the principals' contract renewal process is a process on leadership, it's a process by which the principal is invited to reflect on their last period of contract, and then to test the findings of that principal against the community of parents and teachers. It's an important part to affirm all the good that the principal may have accomplished in that period of time, and also to help the principal set directions for the future, in the next period of contract. And that process sits very

comfortably in a process where the school curriculum has already been examined, and the community has a very clear sense of direction.

The process of Contract Renewal for the principal is really about the leadership of that principal and how that principal gives life to that review process, and strategic plan implementation.

- I: Any other item on the process, SRD, educational audit, or contract renewal?
- R: Yes. There is a similar process for the assistant principal where they undergo a contract renewal process, and each school develops a way of looking at the work of the teachers. At the moment in Sydney we're trialing a process where teachers are asked on an annual basis to set goals for themselves and to look closely at how they too can support the strategic plan, through their own work as teachers. So that it develops a sense of everyone working together, everyone owning the strategic plan and everyone having a stake in its outcome. And at the heart of all of that is the focus on the child's learning.
- I: When exactly did you first become aware of these processes, and how?
- R: Well, back in 1993 I was a principal of a school and was invited to be on a validating panel for a process that was being introduced, and this was the very first phase of the school review. The next year as a principal we were invited to volunteer to take up the processes of looking at what we do in the school, and because in my own school it had been an annual practice to review what had happened during the course of the year, and then plan for the next year, it seemed a natural progression to take on the system processes and to look at how they might help the future schools direction. So in '94 the school where I was principal undertook the processes of school review and development and educational audit.
- I: If I understand you, you had this practice before, you said it was an annual assistant--
- R: In many schools there would've been principals working with staffs to work on an annual basis. There'd be some that perhaps didn't, but there were a number of principals who were working in that manner of review. The school review and development process that has been developed at a system level is really to encourage all schools to develop cultural review. And that's it's perhaps a little longer term, because sometimes things cannot be accomplished in a year, and you need to have a longer view.

And the system itself has developed a process of reviewing the Archdiocesan work and as an inner western regional team, we build on that ourselves, and then it moves down into each school community. So that within this timeframe of six years, since 1994 until 1998, every school in the Sydney Diocese will have moved

through this school review and educational audit process.

I: It shows you had a different experience of the origin of these processes, and the next two questions may not be necessary. Should I then ask, What, in general, do you think all these processes are designed to achieve?

R: Well certainly at a system level, because the educational audit process requires a report to be carried forward to the executive director. So the executive director, (name suppressed), but firstly our regional director, (name suppressed) would receive the report and know exactly what the strengths of each school had been identified as, and where the areas for future growth might be.

So for the first time the executive director now has concrete evidence to say where his schools are on the continuum of learning, and educational practice. So that's a very important factor in looking at the quality of what's happening in our schools.

Two, another important aspect of that is that the school community for the first time in many ways has a sense of them as being a school. The staff in a primary school can operate as entities in their own right, that the kindergarten teachers can work through their own programs and have little contact with other classes.

The result of the process means that staffs are now looking together, K to 6, at the educational provision within their school and how it meets the needs of the school. So it brings teachers out of their classroom to have a broader picture, a bigger picture look at what's required within each of their schools. And a report is given to the parents, so the parents know, not only does the school tell them how well the school is operating, but this independent panel is now saying, these are the strengths of the school and these are the areas that the school will now work on in the future.

I: Just to help me put my records straight, are you saying this is what is happening now, or what was the requirement--

R: This is what's happening now.

I: And do you say that is what was expected to happen?

R: Well I would say what's happening now is one. . . the priority aim was to develop a culture of review. So there would be a continual plan of action, that moves from one year to the next, where there's a process of review. The goals are set, the responsibility for the goals are built in to the action plans of the executive of the school, who give it life through the course of the year, and the teachers work within those teams to implement the recommendations, so that they impact on children's learning. The very heart of the process was to improve the quality of



children's learning.

- I: Before now, what used to be the situation, what was happening before now?
- R: Well, before that each school ran whatever processes were in place, and the only access at a system level to what was happening in the school was through the contract renewal process of the principal. So that at the point of the contract renewal for the principal, a panel would come in and examine the work of the school, under the principal's leadership. So they would look at how well the children were learning. They would look at the administration, they'd look at the curriculum development, they'd look at the development of the community, they'd look at the role of parents in the school, as part of looking at the principal as a leader.
- So that was the process where at a system level you had access to what was happening in the school. There was also an opportunity to refer what the principal was doing, but also to set goals for the next period of contract renewal. Now, the system processes of school review in development and educational audit that are now in place will impact on the way that contract renewal process is developed in the future, because if all of these processes are operating, and the data is being gathered from those processes, there won't need to be the same depth of focus on the principal, because they will have already gathered a whole range of information. That's not to say that it's still not very important to focus directly on the leadership of the principal. But it may mean that that process may not be as large as it has been in the past.

SECTION B: OUTCOMES OF THE PROCESSES

- I: You've certainly named a few things that I would consider as outcomes of these processes, and most of them positive. Any more positive outcomes?
- R: Certainly at a school level, the clear focus that schools now have in their future direction, the role of the teacher in carrying those forward. It means that staffs now have a sense of unity, working together. I think the community now has access to information that perhaps was not available to them before. There is greater networking between schools, because they may share common recommendations and so the use of resources in carrying those recommendations forward may become part of connecting school plans.

A greater level of professional conversation at a staff level, because of the depth of examination that's required within the process. Questions or areas that may not have been part of conversation become part of conversation. So that there's a subtle change to the culture.

I: What are some of the negative outcomes?

R: Depending on where and who you speak to, people would say, or could say that nothing changes. You can go through all of this process and it looks the same the year after. It's not worth the time and effort of what you get out of it. It's not worth the input at teacher level, that it detracts from teachers being able to teach, because they're having to focus on other things and be involved in committees, and time that they might've given to teaching now has to be given to something else.

There could be comments around, why do we have to have it if we already know this information, what's the point of having other people come and tell us what we already know. A lot of that has to do with the leadership of the principal in the processes, and how they manage the processes. And whether people own the process as a way of taking their school community forward, or whether they think something has been done to them. And it's about how well staffs own the process.

Now there's no denying that it is additional work, in gathering the data, taking time, but to reflect on what you do is an important aspect of learning, and the reality of teaching, unless the space is created for you, by and large you keep on keeping on. You rarely make the time to sit and think about something. And the system has provided for each school a space in time where they can reflect on what they do, acknowledge the good that they do and develop a plan of action that's going to make it even better.

I: What is CEO doing about improving that mentality, because it seems to be a bit of a hindrance?

R: I think the way forward in that is in the implementation of the strategic plan, in helping it come to fruition. I think in the first couple of years, at a system level, we worked through the processes and then you got to a point where you developed a strategic plan for the next four years. It was then up to the school communities to take that strategic plan and break it down into manageable parts. So that this may be the strategic plan for four years, what are the priorities, what do we have to give life to in that first year, what is going to impact the greatest on the children's learning, what do we take on board.

And in taking those goals for that year, then designing a plan of action around them, what has to be done by the end of the year, who's going to do it, how will it be done and how will we know we've been successful, and monitoring that as you go through the year, with key people on your staff. Now that is becoming more and more the norm in learning to manage it. The reality is too that it's a new process and we're learning to deal with it as we work through it. I mean, my learnings around it have changed enormously in terms of first being a principal

who worked with the process, and now being a consultant working with principals working through the process.

And we're learning all the time, and we've made subtle adaptations to the processes as we've through each of the years, and this coming year, there will be a major review of the practice, because we've just about completed the first round and we're ready to start again. And what it will look like the second time round will be modified by our learning of this first round. And it's about the support that the consultant provides to the principal in keeping the conversation going. That's vital.

I: Can you name some of the desirable outcomes that you expect these processes would achieve, or have not yet been achieved?

R: At the moment, the focus has been by and large on the documentation of what is required in the syllabus. The focus is starting to change towards not only what you provide and what is required, but, how successful the children are learning. So that there's a subtle change occurring now where we're moving from, not just what the teachers do but what are the learning outcomes for the children. And not only that, but what is the evidence to support that the learning has been successful.

And that's a real challenge, because it brings in that whole question of accountability, and we're working with that now, because by and large, within our own schools, there've been very few external, in primary school, measures. All the evaluation to date that's taken place in our schools has been at a subjective level within the school, you know, anecdotal records, profiles of children's work and by and large they may have varied from class to class.

Now what's happening as a result of being part of the process, a consistency has been developed. Schools are now having to look very closely at how they assess children, and what they do with that information about the next lot of planning. So that while in the past there could've been a practice where teachers would plan, teachers would assess and then they would just pick up the planning, without the assessment impacting on the next lot of planning. And now we're looking far more closely at how we manage that. So that it's not just about knowing what has to be taught, but really focusing on the children's needs, and where children are first of all.

I: That has been achieved so far, hasn't it?

R: Yes. And that's a real growth step in assessment, and by and large, when you look at the recommendations of the audits in primary schools, somewhere there will be a recommendation around assessment, because it's the K to 6 consistency that has to be established. We now have also at a system level an external test around reading and writing in year 5, which is called the DART programme, which really

helps teachers and schools check against their own findings and external objective result.

So it now becomes another piece of information that helps support what's happening in the schools.

### SECTION C: EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROCESSES

I: Let us see what are the perceptions of people about this implementation. At the moment you are a regional consultant. How involved are you in the implementation of these Processes?

R: The consultants' role in the processes is very important. The principal leads the process for the school review and development, and the consultant is part of that group working with the principal. The educational audit, the consultant leads the process. The principal prepares the report and the staff work with that principal to prepare the report, but the consultant with a panel comes in and validates that report and prepares a report back to the principal on the findings.

Now it just doesn't stop there. In the implementation of the recommendations then the consultant's required to work closely with the principal in monitoring how that goes over the next four years, and by talking with the principal through a goal setting exercise on an annual basis, that helps keep the program on target. Now if that doesn't happen, the wheels can fall off it.

I: So there is the problems of the consultant. What factors do you still see now that are really assisting these processes to be implemented?

R: Well I think more positive responses are coming now from schools. We're starting to hear more positive responses than perhaps negative responses, and I think it's about the level of ownership at a school level, where people say, well yes the system has said that we must take on board these processes, but let's make them work for ourselves, let's use the expertise and the opportunity to review what we do, and let's work on it together. And in those schools where that's happening, then we're getting very positive responses. No-one's denying that it takes extra time and effort. But the impact that it has on the planning is quite dramatic.

I: So those are the factors that are helping. Could there be some factors that are really against?

R: Well certainly, I mean, at the level of involvement, if someone feels that something is being done to them, they have no ownership of that, and so if it's not successful, it's not their problem. It's because it was done to them, or it wasn't done correctly, or we don't agree with it. And so there's no ownership of that, and

so if there's no ownership it has very little chance of being carried forward and impacting at a school level.

If teachers are not involved in the process to the extent that they have ownership of the process, then there's little chance of it being successful, because it's required that teachers will in some way operate in a different way at the other end of that process. And if they're not prepared to own it as theirs, they're not going to do that, so nothing changes. And that's the danger, that we've got to try and work against to ensure that there is ownership, there is a commitment to it, and that people are going to work very carefully together to ensure that those goals are met.

I: Within your area or Region, could you say there are some schools where the teachers have not taken up ownership of these processes?

R: Within the schools that I've worked with to date, I'd have to say that, because I have involved not only the principal but the executive and the staff in working through it, there would be some who have said it was harder than others, but in developing the action plan for the next year, it's been a whole staff effort, in each of the schools that I've worked with. So I'm very pleased with what's happening in those schools. But I'm also working very carefully with those executives and staffs to help shape the action plan for the next year, as a way of modelling, a way of operating.

And I would think that as we move into the second round, perhaps the role that I play would be a little different, because I won't be required in the same way. And you operate differently, depending on the need of each school too. But I do know that there have been places where, after the report is handed down but perhaps there's not as strong an ownership of the results, as in other places. And I can't speak to those factors, because they're not my schools.

I: Do you think there is anything within your capacity that you could do to improve the situation?

R: At a consultant level, the way I interact with the principal in the processes is vital. The way we work together in helping to bring staff on board is very very important. And sometimes it's got a lot to do with the leadership style of the principal, as to whether - if principals don't operate in that same way in their own schools, it can be very difficult to have an open consultation with staff. So it requires principals to be consultative in their leadership styles to really give life to the programme and to the processes.

I: In any situation you have pros and cons, negative, positive and something you'd like. Are there some aspects of these processes that you really like and why would you say you like them, or are there others that you don't very much like, and why?

- R: In looking at what's happening at the other end of it, the things that I really value through the processes is the opportunity for staffs and communities to come together. I think that's exciting. In the school review and development process, giving parents the opportunity to be consulted in what's happening in their schools, we have a very strong commitment to parents being partners in our communities, and probably this process at a consistent level is the first time that all schools are having an opportunity to talk with their parent communities, because sometimes, for a whole range of reasons, some people find that easier or harder than others. At a system level through the process, parents are being invited to share in goal setting for the next four years. That's terrific.

The opportunity for staffs to operate as a team, to really touch the culture of Catholic schools that says, we have a commitment and a mission together to provide the very best quality education within the tradition of a Catholic education that we can possibly provide. And that requires us to be a team working together. Within that team we all have roles, but none is more important than the class teacher.

And within the process there is scope for really highlighting the role of the class room teacher, and the importance of the class room teacher. And it also requires an accountability.

- I: Those are the aspects you like, are there any aspects you don't like?

- R: At a school level, I see some of the levels that principals and school communities have gone to gather the documentation has been quite extreme, that there are guidelines and they don't have to go past those guidelines. But whenever a principal or a staff open their school to external examination, they want to look the best they possibly can. So in many cases in the first few years, a great deal of extra effort and time was given to gathering the data and the documentation, that really wasn't required. We are slowly breaking down that by saying, it's not necessary, you don't have to do this, this is all you are required to provide.

- I: As far as the education audit is concerned?

- R: As far as the Education Audit is concerned, because probably if you looked at the two processes, the school communities wouldn't see the same concern around the school review and development process as they would around the educational audit. There'd be more angst around the Educational Audit for class room teachers. And sometimes it's the way the documentation's been gathered that's caused the problem. And that needs to be refined again and again.

- I: Is there no particularly set out procedure from the CEO to the schools on how to gather the documents?

- R: Yes it certainly is, it's there in black and white. But you can't sometimes, the human element within principals and within staffs to go the extra mile, and certainly it's also an opportunity in some minority of cases for principals to do some shaking. And while the process doesn't look directly at individual teachers, it looks at the work of the school K to 6, principals can use it as an opportunity to challenge teachers, you need to pick up your act on that, or there's going to be a lot of work around this and you'll really have to be focused, or your records aren't up to date, you're going to have to make sure that this is done and this is done and this is done.

I even have heard someone say, there's a lot of work around the Educational Audit. If you're not prepared to be part of it, maybe this isn't the school for you. Now that's another agenda altogether. And it says that the principal hasn't addressed those needs of that teacher, or what's lacking in that teacher on a one to one, as part of the work of the school, but is using the process to do it for her, or him.

- I: So what do you suggest could be done to remedy such a situation?

- R: As we work with principals and look carefully at the requirements of the documentation, and as people go through it, we're only one year away from having completed all of the schools, and so it will be in the refinement of the second round that it won't be as full on as it has been in the past five years, because we already will have one lot of data, and it will be testing the recommendations that were made and how successfully they've been achieved, and what are the indicators that they've been achieved, and is there anything else that needs to be taken on in the next four years. So we're looking now, at a system level, to review these four or five years and help shape what will be required in the next round, based on those recommendations.

- I: Overall, what would be your assessment of the entire Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO?

- R: The system process?

- I: Yes, and all of them.

- R: I don't think we have enough data to know how successful they are. We won't really know, we might have a sense of it as consultants from working in it, but we won't really know until the next time around, when we look at the evidence that says these recommendations have been met. If the focus has been on assessment, developing a consistent approach to assessment K - 6, well it will be looking at what the children are doing and how they're achieving that will provide the evidence the next time around, as to whether it has been successful or not.

I: Without the evidence, what is your feelings so far?

R: I would say that, from my work with schools that are working towards it, there has been a change in culture, and I think that's been successful. I think the way people are operating, they can't go back to the way they were operating. The school is changed forever in the way that it operates, and the way that they work as a team.

I: So you think the processes---?

R: No, I believe that whatever the negativity is out there at the moment, that will dissipate over the next little while. But I think that a whole opportunity of an ongoing review process is vital. Because that's how we test how well we're operating, and what we can do better. We should never ever think that we've got there, because there is always something that we can do.



**APPENDIX G-2:**

**VALIDATION OF THE INTERVIEW  
TRANSCRIPTS AND APPROVAL TO USE THE DATA**

**APPENDIX G-2:**VALIDATION OF THE INTERVIEW AND APPROVAL TO USE DATA.

Australian Catholic University  
 Mount Saint Mary Campus  
 179 Albert Road, Strathfield NSW 2135

RESIDENCE

St. Joseph's presbytery  
 763 Canterbury Road  
 Belmore NSW 2192  
 08/04/97.

Dear Participant,

**Re: VALIDATION OF INTERVIEWS AND APPROVAL TO USE DATA**

Thank you once again for your participation at the last interview I had with you on the research project –*Quality Assurance Processes: The Nature, Outcomes and Effectiveness of the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney*.

You would recall that I promised to make available to you the transcript of the interview. I am hereby sending you a copy of that interview transcript, and asking for your approval before the data from it could be used in the study. I should be grateful if you could read through it, make any corrections/additions, and then indicate your approval.

To indicate your approval please sign the attached Form and return it with the corrected transcript to me in the stamped-addressed envelop enclosed.

I shall be expecting your return mail in two weeks time from the date of this letter. If, however, I do not receive any reply from you by the end of April 1997, I shall presume that your approval has been granted to use the data in my project.

With warm regards and sincere appreciation for your cooperation I remain,

Yours sincerely,

Michael Idobo  
 (Researcher)

**VALIDATION AND APPROVAL FOR RESEARCHER TO USE THE DATA**

**Research Topic:** *Quality Assurance Processes: The Nature, Outcomes and Effectiveness of the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney.*

**Researcher:** Michael Idobo

**Institution:** Australian Catholic University  
Mount Saint Mary Campus  
179 Albert Road,  
Strathfield NSW 2135

I, the undersigned, having read through the interview transcript, do agree that it represents what I said, and I hereby give approval that the data be used by the researcher for the purposes of the research only.

ANY FURTHER COMMENT: NO YES (Please state).

Name.....Signature.....Date.....

**APPENDIX H-1-3**

**CODED SUMMARY OF THE ANALYSIS OF  
THE MAIN STUDY INTERVIEWS**

## APPENDIX H-1:

**Table.1: Coded summary of the analysis of the Main Study interviews on the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney.**

KEY WORDS AND TERMS THAT MAKE UP THE SUBJECTS AS DERIVED FROM THE INTERVIEWS				CATEGORY ONE - CEO									
A: NATURE	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	010	011	012	013
Quality Assurance Processes	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓✓		✓
PPPR Process	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓✓	
SRD Process	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓✓
Ed. Audit Process	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓		✓
Contract Renewal Process	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓✓	✓	✓		✓	✓✓
Strategic Management Plan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓✓			✓		
Accountability Process	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓✓			✓	✓	✓	✓✓		✓
Developmental Process	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓✓		✓
<b>B: OUTCOMES</b>													
Accountability	✓	✓	✓		✓				✓	✓	✓		
Development	✓		✓	✓		✓				✓			
Ensuring quality	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Mission Statement	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓			✓
Vision Statement	✓	✓	✓										✓
Culture of Review	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓		
Work confidence			✓							✓			✓
Community involvement	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓		✓		
<b>C: EFFECTIVENESS</b>													
Resources	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓			
Ownership of Process		✓	✓		✓	✓			✓		✓		
Effective leadership	✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓✓
Feedback and information system	✓				✓		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
Monitoring/Supervision	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
System support	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Affirming people		✓		✓				✓	✓		✓		✓
Linking the Processes			✓							✓			

## APPENDIX H-2:

Table.2: Coded summary of the analysis of the Main Study interviews on the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney

KEY WORDS AND TERMS THAT MAKE UP THE SUBJECTS AS DERIVED FROM THE INTERVIEWS		CATEGORY TWO - SCH									
A: NATURE	014	015	016	017	018	019	020	021	022	023	024
Quality Assurance Processes	✓		✓	✓	✓✓	✓			✓	✓	
PPPR Process	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
SRD Process	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
Ed. Audit Process	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Contract Renewal Process					✓						
Strategic Management Plan										✓	
Accountability Process					✓✓	✓	✓		✓✓	✓✓	✓✓
Developmental Process					✓				✓	✓	
B: OUTCOMES											
Accountability	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Development	✓			✓		✓					
Ensuring quality	✓				✓		✓		✓	✓	
Mission Statement	✓		✓		✓			✓	✓		
Vision Statement											
Culture of Review	✓✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	
Work confidence	✓										
Community involvement	✓	✓						✓	✓✓		✓
C: EFFECTIVENESS											
Resources	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	
Ownership of Process	✓				✓				✓		
Effective leadership	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Feedback and information system					✓	✓					
Monitoring/Supervision			✓		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
System support	✓	✓					✓	✓	✓		
Affirming people	✓		✓		✓						✓
Linking the Processes					✓						

## APPENDIX H-3:

Table.3: Coded summary of the analysis of the Main Study interviews on the Quality Assurance Processes of the CEO, Sydney

KEY WORDS AND TERMS THAT MAKE UP THE SUBJECTS AS DERIVED FROM THE INTERVIEWS				CATEGORY TWO - SCH							
A: NATURE	025	026	027	028	029	030	031	032	033	034	035
Quality Assurance Processes		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	was	✓
PPPR Process	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	not	✓
SRD Process	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	to be	✓
Ed. Audit Process	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	used	
Contract Renewal Process						✓	✓	✓	✓		
Strategic Management Plan											
Accountability Process	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓		✓✓		✓
Developmental Process				✓			✓				✓
B: OUTCOMES											
Accountability	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓
Development			✓	✓		✓					✓
Ensuring quality	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓			
Mission Statement			✓			✓					✓
Vision Statement						✓					
Culture of Review		✓	✓	✓	✓✓	✓	✓		✓✓		✓
Work confidence											
Community involvement	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
C: EFFECTIVENESS											
Resources	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓				✓		
Ownership of Process								✓			
Effective leadership						✓	✓				✓
Feedback and information system		✓									✓
Monitoring/Supervision	✓		✓	✓					✓		
System support		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Affirming people	✓				✓		✓	✓			✓
Linking the Processes						✓					

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